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# THE SACRED RIVER

## THE SACRED RIVER

AN APPROACH TO JAMES JOYCE

Where Alph, the sacred river, ran  
Through caverns measureless to man  
Down to a sunless sea.

COLERIDGE: *Kubla Khan*.

. . . Beside the rivering waters of, hitherandthithering  
waters of . . . night!

JOYCE: *Finnegans Wake*.

That dolphin-torn, that gong-tormented sea.

YEATS: *Byzantium*.

# THE SACRED RIVER

*AN APPROACH TO JAMES JOYCE*

*by*

L. A. G. STRONG



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FOR  
TOM TURNER

To whose friendship, knowledge, and library  
I owe so much



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L.A.G.S.





## FOREWORD

**M**OST readers, when they are confronted with a book which appears difficult and calls for effort on their part, wish first of all to know if the effort is worth while. They ask what sort of writer is challenging them, and what he is doing.

This approach to Joyce is made, on lines to be laid down, in the interest of such readers. Presupposing little previous knowledge of Joyce, it necessarily makes points that will be platitudes to those more deeply read; and it leans heavily on the work of previous critics. Yet the lines of approach are individual, there is an attempt to relate Joyce to those who went before him, and some of the conclusions reached have not, to the best of my knowledge, been set down elsewhere.

### 2

A quick outline of Joyce's life may help the reader to follow the main *motifs* and threads of his work.

James Joyce was born in 1882, in Dublin. His father, dashing, feckless, often hard up, had a beautiful tenor voice. His mother was gentle and devout.

When he was six and a half, the boy was sent to Clongowes, a famous Jesuit school, where he stayed for the four years that saw first the vindication then the fall of Parnell. From Clongowes he went to Belvedere College, where he showed evidence of quick intelligence and scholarship, and, at one time, thought of entering the Jesuit order.

In 1898 he entered University College, Dublin, which had associations with Cardinal Newman, and once had Gerard Manley Hopkins on its staff. Here he discovered great abilities, particularly in languages and philosophy; and here gave the first sign of his indifference to public opinion, by refusing to put his

name to an undergraduate manifesto which denounced W. B. Yeats's play, *The Countess Cathleen*.

His university studies began to estrange him further and further from the faith in which he had been brought up. He read Ibsen, and at the age of eighteen contributed an article on him to the *Fortnightly Review*. Readings in continental drama led him to regard the Irish theatre of Yeats and Lady Gregory as parochial. In 1902 he took his degree, and left Dublin for Paris, spending a few days in London on the way. He had no longer a home in church or country.

In Paris he all but starved, met J. M. Synge, and read Ben Jonson. Trouble with his teeth may later have brought on the trouble with his eyes: he could not afford treatment by a dentist.

From early boyhood he possessed a pure tenor voice. He was anxious to take singing lessons in Paris, but could not pay for them.

In the spring of the following year a telegram summoned him home to his mother's deathbed. It was a slow and agonising death, and Joyce had the grief of adding to it by refusing to do the one thing that could comfort her, that is, making his submission to the Church.

During the year that followed, Joyce indulged in a period of wild living. He sobered, and obtained a post at a school in Dalkey. Then he met the girl he was to marry. Later, stimulated probably by the success of John McCormack, and with the encouragement of McCormack's first teacher, Vincent O'Brien, he entered the tenor class of the *Feis Ceoil*, the annual musical festival in Dublin, and deprived himself of the gold medal by refusing the third test.<sup>1</sup> When, a few days later, a singing teacher offered to train him in return for a percentage of his earnings, Joyce had decided to leave Ireland for good. In October 1904, he married, and took his wife to Zurich, then to Trieste, where he got a post as a teacher of languages.

There is little point in detailing the years that followed. He was continually disappointed in his writing; there were difficulties and delays over his book of verse, and *Dubliners*, his collection of short stories, was refused as offensive to current

<sup>1</sup> See p. 29.

taste. A son was born, the family was very poor, and in a moment of despair Joyce threw the MS of his first novel, *Stephen Hero*, on the fire. His wife rescued most of it: but Joyce rewrote it in another manner as *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. *Ulysses*, his next book, had to be printed in Paris. The bulk of an edition was seized by the English customs, and the book banned for many years, until a Judge of the American courts decided it was not obscene, even in the legal sense.

During this time, Joyce, always poor, was teaching languages in Trieste, Paris, and Zurich. His eyes were giving him almost constant pain and trouble. Only a series of the most delicate operations preserved his sight.

Great fame came to him in his last years, which were spent in Paris, and the literate world waited eagerly for the appearance, fragment by fragment, of his last novel, finally published as *Finnegans Wake*.

After the fall of France there was little news of him, until his death was announced in Zurich, on January 13th, 1941.



## CHAPTER I

A WRITER is not an isolated phenomenon. Even when, like Blake, he seems to derive little from his own time and surroundings, he is part of a context, and cannot be understood away from it. What is more, the context is so vast that any limits we set to it are arbitrary. Limits there must be, since life is short, and we have to draw a line somewhere: but it is an expedient only. When we look at the work of any considerable writer, we are looking at life itself.

With writers of our own century the difficulty is even greater. A revolution in thought, changed ideas of space and time, new ways of studying character, less emphasis on the conscious efforts of the mind: these are formidable gobbets to digest and assimilate into the work of literary criticism. And when we come to James Joyce, a writer inferior to none in his consciousness of tradition, study of his literary ancestors, and knowledge of the world of ideas, the task of criticism is formidable. To assess Joyce's work fully, the critics must know as much as Joyce did.

For this reason I have limited my scrutiny of Joyce to a few vantage points from which I have some qualification for looking. I will list them in a minute or two: but I wish at the outset to give readers two main warnings.

1. If they have any previous knowledge of Joyce, they will find the opening chapters elementary and jejune. Because the ground has been so well covered before, I have taken from Joyce's earlier books only so much as I need for study of the last. I would therefore ask anyone who is impatient of the beginning to glance at a few pages later on in Chapters VI, VII, VIII, or X, before throwing the book aside.

2. Certain sections, notably the chapter on Shakespeare, may seem to go beyond the scope of the book—until the last chapters are reached. Here my defence is that an approach to

any object necessitates a survey of the ground to be covered before we get to it: and that a synthesis so drastic as that which Joyce made between Shakespeare's way of looking at character and certain contemporary ways will seem less startling if we can show that these ways were in fact closely related, and that Joyce's attitude was based on his clear sight of this relationship.

2

From the appearance of the first chapters of *Ulysses*, the work of James Joyce has been a battle ground. The greater part of what has been written has been violently for or against, and, because of the heat which has been generated, it has been difficult to discuss Joyce's work without being dragged into the witness box by one side or the other.

Both champions and detractors have tended to rush from the particular to the general. Certain champions claim that, because Joyce did this or that, it has become a universal rule of art. Certain opponents protest that he ought not to have done it because a universal rule of art forbade. Some critics cry that he has added a fourth dimension to the art of the novel; others that, by its very nature, it can have only three. Some base their definition of the novel on the classics—that is, on novels that have been approved by succeeding generations—without considering whether essential fences have been broken down in the process. When we examine the copious writings about Joyce, we find little that will help a new reader to approach this original and difficult writer, and to make an unbiassed judgment.

This is not altogether the critic's fault. A new way of looking at the world always provokes hostility. This is a rule of art, proved by every generation. Sometimes the hostility is justified, sometimes not. But, because it always appears, and because an art only develops through the efforts of successful pioneers, artists are obliged to defend passionately the right of a colleague to attempt new things. This defence of the right to experiment is often mistaken for advocacy of the experiment concerned, and often partakes of advocacy, when artists, differing widely in aim, make common cause against their traditional enemies. These

are the philistines, and, far worse, those who, having learned in their brief period of receptiveness to admire one form of art, resent the emergence of anything unlike it.

Thus the writers who have defended Joyce's right to experiment, and who have tried to explain what he was doing, have been provoked by his attackers to a warmth of tone which has been taken to mean whole-hearted approval of the experiments. Some did approve: others, maybe, did not. It is safe to say that most of them realised that here was a writer whose gifts and integrity were such that everything he did deserved the most careful and respectful examination.

Finally, Joyce is such a virtuoso, so constantly preoccupied with the technique of writing, that writers are fascinated, sometimes against their will. Just as singers and pianists will talk for hours of a colleague towards whom the general public is lukewarm, writers can sit spellbound before a master of the various means of saying things, and forget to enquire into what is being said. To the general reader, the paramount question is not the amazing variety with which Joyce said what he had to say, but whether it was worth saying. The writer can always learn from Joyce's experiments. The reader, before embarking on a task of admitted difficulty, wants to be sure that the effort is worth while.

Coleridge has laid down as a principle of literary criticism that every work of art must contain in itself the reason why it is itself and not otherwise. This leads to the important corollary that one must approach every work of art as it is; go to meet it on its own ground, and in its own terms.<sup>1</sup> If it satisfies Coleridge's requirement, then its form will be inseparable from its content; the thing said will be inseparable from the way in which it is said: the work will be a world of its own, with its own laws, by which it must be judged. We can make no useful judgment of Joyce until we have found out what he was trying to do, against what background, and in what context.

<sup>1</sup> A work of art is the expression of a personal vision and so, to a certain extent, must create its own appropriate form, be judged by its own rules. (LORD DAVID CECIL: *Hardy the Novelist*.) For the general reader, the important words are "to a certain extent."

In the pages that follow I propose, therefore, to examine four simple questions.

1. What sort of writer was James Joyce?
2. What did he write, and why?
3. How did he write?
4. Was it worth while?

To answer these questions it will be necessary to study Joyce's work in some detail; to look at some of the writers who impressed him; to glance at certain theories, in philosophy, psychology, and physics, which informed him; and to sift out a good deal that has been written about him. The conclusions will be summed up in Chapter X. Before that, there is a long way to go, and I once more ask the reader who finds this or that remark a platitude, or doubts the relevance of certain enquiries, to be patient with me.

The subsidiary question, why I, a writer whose work is traditional in form, have set myself this task, I hope to answer in the next few pages.

### 3

Writers are divided into two main groups: those who look outward to the object for truth, and those who seek it in themselves. For instance:

Two writers were walking down a hill, near Exeter, discussing their work. They approached a magnificent tree. Suddenly aware of it, one broke off, and pointed.

"I'll tell you the difference between you and me. Suppose we both had to write about that oak. I'd send my monkeys to climb all over it, to examine every detail, explore every twig, look under each leaf, see why one branch thrived and another died, find out what birds nested and what squirrel made his store in it, get to know what it was like in all weathers, lights, and seasons . . . Then, when I'd digested all the information, when my imagination had assimilated it, I'd write.

"You would take one look at the tree, then avert your eyes, and stare into yourself for the tree's reflection. Objective data



about the tree wouldn't interest you. All you would want to do, all you could do, would be to say what effect the tree had on your inner vision."

The second writer agreed.

"All the same, I should get a good sight of the tree first. If it didn't make a real impression on me, it couldn't have an effect worth writing about. There wouldn't be any difference between it and any other natural object. My writing isn't altogether unrelated to the outer world."

This conversation over-simplifies the distinction, but it will serve to illustrate two contrasted methods of approach. The first, which with many writers does not get beyond the accumulation of detail, and does not wait for it to be digested imaginatively, results in a mass of realistic writing, called at its best naturalism, and at its crudest reporting. The second is subjective, introverted, occupied with effects rather than with causes. Outside of journalism, where work has to be done very quickly and there is usually no time for imaginative assimilation, the first kind is rarely found in its extreme state. The extreme state of the second is rare too, in the novel, at any rate. Most novelists combine both methods, with a preference for one or the other. Hard-and-fast definitions belong to textbooks rather than to life. As Jung said of his own classifications, "An introvert is one who prefers his introverted to his extraverted means of expression."<sup>1</sup>

Joyce is extraordinary, not in combining both methods, but in progressing deliberately from one to the other. He began as an external writer. His early verses were pastiche, his first prose book, *Dubliners*, a triumph of naturalism; quiet, accurate recording of observed characters and conversations. *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* applied these methods to the study of an introverted character, with monologues and divagations into the inner world of that character's sensations. In *Ulysses* the balance was fairly held between inner and outer reality, between what happened and what the characters felt about it; but the investigation of their feelings went below the surface into thoughts of which they were only half conscious, and into associations which

<sup>1</sup> At a Seminar held in London, 1936.

existed only at the back of their minds. Sometimes it probed deeply into fantasy and nightmare, and, in so doing, took its language with it. Where most of his predecessors had been content to record half conscious states of mind in the speech of full consciousness, Joyce sought a speech that belonged to the level he wished to portray. *Finnegans Wake*, his last work, which is wholly concerned with such deeper levels of consciousness, being in effect a linked series of dreams experienced by a single Dubliner during a single night, completes Joyce's pilgrimage from the first literary attitude to the second, from objective scrutiny of the world outside to the most deeply introspective attitude and technique in the novel's history.

More than this, he deliberately restricted his intake of fresh impressions. After the sixteenth of June, 1904, Joyce admitted no new material. Everything heard or seen after that date was used to express, elaborate, and recall the material he already possessed, the material which, in the phrase of the writer mentioned just now, his monkeys had brought him. Their activity and their powers of observation had been prodigious. Joyce retained an encyclopædic and detailed memory of the city which he left for good in 1904. He had enough material for a lifetime, and he gave a lifetime to its embodiment. All his interests now lay in technique, in the best means of portraying this crowded microcosm which was to be a picture of all life. This shutting out of fresh material coincided with the failure of his eyes. For all the skill and pertinacity with which Joyce afterwards used contemporary life to illustrate the Dublin of his youth, he was as a man paralysed. He was cut off, by his own act, from the renewal which fresh life can give. He had lost all power of looking outwards at the tree of life. He could only look into his own depths, and seek everywhere for means to evoke the tree's image which he saw there. All his subsequent examination of the material world was a search for such means.

So much has been written about Joyce, and so much inevitably will be written, that each writer must ask himself why he is

adding to the mass. The interest in Joyce which drives me to write about him has eight particular points of focus:

1. Vivid childhood and boyhood memories of Dublin as Joyce knew it, and for some ten years afterwards, during which it changed very little.

2. Technical interest in singing, and in singers.

3. Interest in the workings of the subconscious mind.

4. A taste for metaphysical speculation.

5. Practice in writing verse, short stories, and novels, with a predilection for those borderlands where one level of consciousness shades into another.

6. Irish blood and love of Ireland, coupled with the conviction that Ireland in the twentieth century is no place for an Irish writer to live in.

7. Frequent recourse to Shakespeare, Swift, and Blake, the three writers who most deeply influenced Joyce.

8. Belief in the Christian revelation.

Whether these eight points of interest help or hinder an appreciation of Joyce lies open to question. To take each in turn:

1. Familiarity with Joyce's scene may confuse judgment. There is often a tendency to over-value books dealing with places which we know well. The mere names call up pleasant memories, and we are apt to forget that we are doing the writer's work for him. Because I can feel, to the last tingle of my fingers' ends, the sensations associated with the Martello Tower at Sandycove and the Forty-foot bathing place below it, which is the scene of the first chapter of *Ulysses*; because I can see the Hill of Howth in the haze of a summer's morning, and smell the sea, and look at the milky bulk of the Tower in the early sunlight; may I not be a worse judge of the power of Joyce's prose to convey these things to a reader who does not know them at first hand? May I not exaggerate Joyce's powers of evocation, and see the places which he names before he recreates them?

This is possible: but, since I myself often attempt descriptive writing, and labour to recall the atmosphere and character of places, I am likely to be critical of any attempt to recall and suggest the places which held magic for my most perceptive years.

I therefore look on my knowledge of Dublin and its environs as helping rather than hindering me to appreciate Joyce's work; also my ear for the Dublin speech, which enables me to hear Joyce's cadences and give his dialogue the approximate intonations. For the rest, I doubt if any but the practising writer can fully appreciate Joyce's technical mastery and his all but unprecedented command of language.

2. This is important. Joyce had a beautiful tenor voice, and used it well. There exists the programme of a Dublin concert giving the names of two tenors, Mr. James Joyce and Mr. J. F. McCormack. Joyce's biographer records<sup>1</sup> that at least two eminent teachers offered to train his voice in exchange for a percentage of his earnings during the first years of the operatic career they foresaw. A sense of the frustration of this talent probably accounts in part for Joyce's admiration and championship of the Irish dramatic tenor, John Sullivan, whom he rated the greatest in the world. *Ulysses*, and to an even greater degree *Finnegans Wake*, resounds with references to singing, songs, and singers. Far more important, much of Joyce's writing is musical in structure and can be best appreciated by readers who understand something about phrasing in song. The line of development is clear from the first book of verses, *Chamber Music*, through the lyric rhythms so frequent in *Ulysses*,<sup>2</sup> to the singing incantations of *Anna Livia Plurabelle* and *Finnegans Wake* at large. No one can get the full sense of Joyce's phrasing who has not studied to sing a *legato* phrase, or at least to hear it skilfully.

3. Joyce's attempt to record different levels of consciousness was as fully prepared for and documented as every other part of his work. It is therefore an advantage in reading him to have some acquaintance with twentieth century psychology, particularly with the systems of Freud and Jung, and with the ways in which the earlier writers approached the deeper workings of the human mind.

<sup>1</sup> *James Joyce*, by HERBERT GORMAN.

<sup>2</sup> "The metrical parts of Joyce—such as the Sirens episode in *Ulysses*—which renders music and the effects of music—one obviously associates with his vocal gifts." EDMUND WILSON: *The Triple Thinkers*.

Any independent study of dreams, and of altered levels of consciousness, will also be useful. The danger here is to read Joyce in the light of any one theory, and, of course, to find evidence to support one's approach. It soon becomes apparent, however, unless the reader is the slave of a particular system, that, as in everything else, Joyce helped himself to what he wanted, from whatever source. It is at any rate fair to say that as much study in psychology and dream material is needed to get at Joyce's aims and methods in dealing with the unconscious mind, as in Dublin lore, philology, and the history of literature. It is a subject that has fascinated me for many years, and, while I can lay claim to no systematic work, I have had the opportunity of familiarising myself with the theory and practice of several distinguished psychologists. So, always bearing in mind that Joyce's business was creation, not theory, I have found these studies a help in the attempt to understand him.

4. Joyce, as very soon appears, was deeply interested in metaphysics and philosophy,<sup>1</sup> Western and Eastern. The reader of *Finnegans Wake* will find it intricately involved with questions about the nature of time.<sup>2</sup> Stephen in *A Portrait of the Artist* delivers philosophical monologues to anyone who will listen. The ghost of St. Thomas Aquinas walks in *Ulysses*. *Finnegans Wake* owes what shape it has to the findings of an eighteenth century Italian philosopher.

5. The creative writer is not as a rule a good critic. When he is, there is usually something wrong with his creative work. But he can often express excellent snap judgments, especially on work with which he is in sympathy. He can make magnificent remarks, as did Wilde. He can illumine by a lightning flash the heart or purpose of a writer at a given moment, as Yeats did many times. He can epitomise a tendency or a state of life which affects his work, as Synge did in his prefaces. His sense of character from time to time enables him to hit the nail on the head. But he cannot keep it up. The need to follow his own star forbids a too patient and systematic following up of others'. He sees

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter VIII.

<sup>2</sup> See Chapter VII.

what suits him. He is not good at relating his moments of perception to a critical philosophy, or even to each other. Sporadic truth is the most that can fairly be expected of him. His great advantage lies in knowing something about the technique of his own craft, and about the difficulty of saying anything well. Joyce is a very great technician, and deserves all the technical scrutiny that can be turned upon him.

6. "Ireland is the sow that eats her own farrow." Joyce's love for his country is like the angry love of a son for a drunken mother.<sup>1</sup> He loves her so deeply that he cannot write of anything else. He hates her so fiercely that he leaves home, and never returns. He suffers the pains of exile, but keeps his soul. Ireland today persecutes every writer who is not content to make his act of submission and accept a censorship which in this country would be thought excessive for a girls' school.<sup>2</sup> Her rulers, spiritual and temporal, seem resolved to keep her in a pre-adolescent stage. Few artists are able to endure this. One after another, they are added to the legion of exiles from Erin. To know the rigours and prejudices of life in modern Ireland is to understand why a writer of independent mind, a fanatical solitary of thought, was bound to leave it . . .

All day long I had dreamed  
What I had hoped 'twould be  
To write for my own race  
And for the reality . . .<sup>3</sup>

Many an Irish writer has started with this ambition, only to find that his own race greatly dislikes the combination, and so

In scorn of this audience  
and

Indignant at the fumbling wits, the obscure spite . . .<sup>4</sup>  
has turned elsewhere.

<sup>1</sup> Or of Hamlet for his mother.

<sup>2</sup> It has been a little relaxed since this was written; but not much.

<sup>3</sup> W. B. YEATS: *The Fisherman*.

<sup>4</sup> W. B. YEATS: *Paudeen*.

It is one of Ireland's many misfortunes that she drives out those who, if she only knew it, could serve her best, and makes of them heart-sore wanderers, or prodigals that never return. With Joyce, as will appear presently, there were additional reasons, born of his psychological makeup, which made his flight inevitable. In any case, a writer whose *Dubliners* an English publisher held up for several years, and whose *Ulysses* was banned in England and America, could not have existed, much less worked, in Ireland.

7. I have never met a serious writer who did not read Shakespeare. Most read Swift, and many Blake. Habitual and preferential recourse to all three indicates an attitude towards life and letters which will be a bond between those who share it. Add to this that Joyce knew his Flaubert thoroughly, and that as an undergraduate I had much of *Trois Contes* by heart, and there are additional possibilities that I may sometimes see what Joyce was at.

8. Joyce was brought up as a Catholic, and never escaped. The early phases of the struggle are set out with eloquence and anguish in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. In this the student Cranly blasphemes in order to test Stephen's professed lack of faith, and Stephen has to confess that he is shocked. "It is a curious thing," says Cranly, "how your mind is supersaturated with the religion in which you say you disbelieve."<sup>1</sup> Over *Ulysses* as over the earlier work broods the sense of sin, that terrific spiritual legacy which the Catholic Church irrevocably leaves her children. *Ulysses* is a great Catholic novel. The blasphemies that turn the short-sighted against it are the desperate gestures of a man who is doomed to accept, with his spiritual entrails if not with his intellect, certain Last Things. The whole book is the agonised attempt of a great writer to bring all life within his scope, knowing with the whole power of his nature that the effort is also a religious effort, and agonised because, while his genius obliges him to accept his own valuation of life's qualities, his own interpretation of them, he cannot escape from the interpretations and valuations put upon them by tradition and

<sup>1</sup> In *Finnegans Wake*, p. 573, the supremacy of Rome over the Protestant churches is roundly asserted.

authority. The Catholic writer knows that none other is better equipped to face life and portray it in all its aspects, but he is tortured by the problems of expediency. This is not to say that Joyce remained a Catholic writer. But he is always a theologian. He still sees the world in terms of the faith in which he was brought up, and his struggles attest its power. It is there, like the mountains around Dublin, and he can never forget it. No man attacks that to which he is indifferent, and Joyce's rage is a tribute to the hold of the Church on his unconscious mind, on the depths whence comes so much of his work. Christianity for Joyce is inescapable, and his critics cannot escape it either. Protesting with all the strength of his nature against a discipline which he felt to be a perversion of the teaching of Christ, he still could not shake off the power of "a symbol behind which are massed twenty centuries of authority and veneration":<sup>1</sup> and the thought that both tortured and sustained him in his years of exile was the fear that, in order to follow his vocation, he had damned his soul.

5

These eight points, while they do not justify any claim to understand Joyce and his work, at least make failure less excusable. Failure there must be, for Joyce was a genius, and genius will not give up its full message to anything less. But, because Joyce is so copious, because there is in him so much more than any single commentator can possibly dig out, there is room for a very great number of attempts, and each, provided its terms are defined, stands a chance of getting something. The best way to approach a genius is in humility and with great inquisitiveness; and there is a chance for every honest enquirer.

There, then, are the prepossessions with which I approach Joyce. I am encouraged also by the fact that he has been very little written about by his own countrymen. In Ireland itself, his work is still widely regarded as scandalous and not worth serious consideration. There are, of course, exceptions: the writers have made no such error. Many of his Irish colleagues

<sup>1</sup> *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man.*



saluted *Ulysses*, and, in recent days, Mr. Frank O'Connor has written eloquently of his work as a whole in the leading Irish literary review:<sup>1</sup> but the blanket of ecclesiastical displeasure is of a smothering weight. When, a few years back, I was invited to lecture to the Royal Dublin Society, and proposed to speak on Joyce, I was informed in tones of dignified reproach that such a subject would not be acceptable to the members. An Irish literary group in London was, naturally, more liberal, but prejudice smouldered even there, and during the discussion a doctor of medicine explained to us that Joyce not only was a pornographic writer, but was incompetent at description and had no sense of the value of words. Such views may not seem worth mentioning, when Joyce's status is so generally admitted, but his case remains to be argued in his native land, and an Irish writer must sometimes argue it—even though an attempt to rebut the false case which Irishmen have botched up against Joyce be foredoomed before it is made. That many good and honest people have been shocked by *Ulysses* is beyond doubt, but a great many more have been shocked by reports upon it, and of the genuinely shocked, many have wholly misunderstood the purpose and meaning of the book, and have been shocked by sentences and extracts taken out of their context.

It is an irony, of a type unhappily familiar in history, that Joyce, a moralist whose main concern was man's conscience, and his conflict with evil, whose work is contorted with horror of evil, who was so puritanical an artist that he would starve sooner than alter what he felt to be right, should be branded as irreligious and licentious. The brand, as everyone knows, had now been legally removed. The following lines are excerpts from Judge Woolsey's decision, whereby *Ulysses* was admitted to the U.S.A.:

. . . In *Ulysses*, in spite of its unusual frankness, I do not detect anywhere the leer of the sensualist. I hold, therefore, that it is not pornographic.

It is because Joyce has been loyal to his technique and has not funk'd its necessary implications, but has honestly attempted to tell fully what his characters think about, that he has been the subject

<sup>1</sup> *The Bell*.

of so many attacks and that his purpose has been so often misunderstood and misrepresented . . . Whether or no one enjoys such a technique as Joyce uses is a matter of taste on which disagreement or argument is futile, but to subject that technique to the standards of some other technique seems to me to be little short of absurd.

Accordingly, I hold that *Ulysses* is a sincere and honest book and I think that the criticisms of it are entirely disposed of by its rationale . . . Without letting either of my assessors know what my decision was, I gave to each of them the legal definition of obscene and asked each whether in his opinion *Ulysses* was obscene within that definition.

I was interested to find that they both agreed with my opinion: that reading *Ulysses* in its entirety, as a book must be read on such a test as this, did not tend to excite sexual impulses or lustful thoughts but that its net effect on them was only that of a somewhat tragic and very powerful commentary on the inner lives of men and women.

It is only with the normal person that the law is concerned . . . I am quite aware that owing to some of its scenes *Ulysses* is rather a strong draught to ask some sensitive, though normal, persons to take. But my considered opinion, after long reflection, is that whilst in many places the effect of *Ulysses* on the reader is somewhat emetic, nowhere does it tend to be an aphrodisiac.

The rest must be left to time. I ask the reader's pardon for this excursion, and for an occasional remark in the course of the book which must appear unnecessary: but an Irish writer may not forget his fellow countrymen.

## 6

There remains the question of obscurity, of sheer interpretation. The difficulties of the later work have been, as a reviewer in the *Listener* put it, "wickedly exaggerated"; but they are considerable. Happily, the spadework of elucidation has been done.

The appearance of *A Skeleton Key to Finnegans Wake*, that unique and admirable piece of research, has cleared up a great many difficulties and has enabled the ordinary reader for the first time to see what Joyce's enormous book is about. It has given him a means to interpret it, traced its main strains of interest, and shown with what erudition and complexity they have been

interwoven in the vast whole. This book has, of course, completely superseded the brief synopsis which I had myself worked out. Even so, for the benefit of readers who have not the *Skeleton Key* to hand, I shall in its place<sup>1</sup> give a very short account of the book's main themes, freely supplemented from the work of Messrs. Robinson and Campbell.

For, complete as their work is, it does not rule out further scrutiny of Joyce's text. We must not forget, also, that there is more to be done with that text than to unravel it verbally. A complete exegesis of every line in the book would, after all, merely bring us to the place at which criticism normally starts—that is, from understanding of the text. The very immensity of Joyce's work makes it all but impossible for any single interpreter or group of interpreters to exhaust it. Just as the great writers of the past yield new riches to the investigators of successive ages, so Joyce will go on for a very long time challenging critics and meeting their challenges. For a long time, I suspect, judgments upon him will be provisional only. There is room for every kind of approach, and for every kind of criticism. Joyce presents us with the Universe, not in a grain of sand, but in a large multi-dimensional map, the centre of which is Dublin. Even when the geographers have finished, there will be room for the surveyors, the economists, the social historians; and all manner of scrutineers, as long as each sticks to what he knows, will in the end have the satisfaction of being useful.

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter IX.

## CHAPTER II

JAMES JOYCE's first work was concerned with Ibsen, to whom and about whom he wrote remarkably while still in his teens. From his admiration for the dramatist was to come a play, *Exiles*, and a love of Scandinavian languages. There is much to praise in the play, and no work by a writer of Joyce's stature can be unimportant: but our only concern with it here need be to note its title and theme, the theme of Joyce's own life, exiled from church and country; one of his dominant ideas, which later found poignant and universal expression in Bloom, the central character of *Ulysses*.

Joyce's first book of poems, *Chamber Music*, consisted of graceful imitations of Jacobean and Caroline lyrics, neat, musical, orderly, the work of a promising minor poet. He took them to A.E., who delighted afterwards in telling against himself "one of the greatest blunders in the history of literary criticism." Joyce sat, cold and severe, while the older poet studied his verses. Finally A.E. handed them back.

"Young man," he proclaimed, "there is not enough chaos in your mind."

Joyce took his manuscript and made no comment. Maybe he remembered this experience when, not very long afterwards, he called on Yeats. They talked for a while; then Joyce rose.

"I thought so," he said. "I have come too late to influence you."<sup>1</sup>

The story fits perfectly Joyce's ferocious inner confidence in his own powers and his destined use of them. Nothing less arrogant would have made him condemn himself and his children to years of poverty, doing ill-paid work as a teacher of languages rather than misuse or desert his pen.

<sup>1</sup> Doubt has been cast on the truth of this story. Yeats himself told it to me at Oxford a year after the publication of *Ulysses*: "I thought it a mad book," he said, "but now I have read it again I see that I was wrong."

For *Dubliners*, his first essay in narrative, Joyce had the greatest difficulty in finding a publisher. The stories, plotless (except *The Dead*), were revolutionary in their unlikeness to anything then supposed to be a short story. They were also thought to contain indecencies. A brief analysis of them will show their lack of plot, and, very much more important, the themes and images, several of them recurrent, which worried Joyce's mind, and were to be repeated and elaborated in his later work.

#### THE SISTERS

An elderly priest has died. The boy who tells the story has always felt inadequate in his relationship to the priest, who was paralysed, and used to explain to him how immensely complicated religion and theology were.

The boy had a dream. . . .

The grey face still followed me. It murmured, and I understood that it desired to confess something. I felt my soul receding into some pleasant and vicious region; and there again I found it waiting for me. It began to confess to me in a murmuring voice and I wondered why it smiled continually and why its lips were so moist with spittle.<sup>1</sup>

. . . As I walked along in the sun, I tried to remember what had happened afterwards in the dream . . . I felt that I had been very far away, in some land where the customs were strange—in Persia, I thought . . .

The priest turns out to have had an accident with a chalice, which preyed on his mind, and to have been found one night sitting alone, laughing, in his confessional box.

#### AN ENCOUNTER

Two boys, one the narrator, play truant, watch ships, and meet an elderly pervert with "bottle-green eyes peering . . . from under a twitching forehead." He talks in an "almost affectionate" monotone of how he would whip a boy who had a sweetheart and told lies about it.

<sup>1</sup> c.f. the monster in Stephen's dream in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*.

## ARABY

The narrator, a boy, wants to go to a bazaar called Araby and get something for a girl whom he adores. His uncle comes home late, drunk, and gives him the money, but the bazaar is closing, and he can get nothing. While waiting for his uncle to come home and give him the money, the boy goes into a back room where a priest had died.

## EVELINE

A girl keeps house for her father, works in a shop for seven shillings a week, and has to wheedle money out of him every Saturday for the marketing. She has been courted by a sailor and has promised to go to Buenos Ayres and marry him. She sits among the familiar furniture, amongst which is a portrait of a priest who has gone to Melbourne.

The girl has promised her dead mother to keep the home together. At the last moment, on the quay, her courage fails her, and she will not follow her lover on board.

All the seas of the world tumbled about her heart. He was drawing her into them. He would drown her . . . She set her white face to him, passive, like a helpless animal. Her eyes gave him no sign of love or farewell or recognition.

## AFTER THE RACE

A young Irishman, son of a successful butcher, expensively educated by his father, has fallen in with some young Frenchmen who have come for the motor races in the Phoenix Park. His father, much impressed, is going to invest money in the motor business owned by one of the Frenchmen. The party, happy and hilarious, drives into the city. A Hungarian pianist sings all the way. They dine, then go out to Kingstown to the yacht of an American friend, where they make merry and gamble. The Irishman and the American lose heavily.

He knew that he would regret in the morning, but at present he was glad of the rest, glad of the dark stupor that would cover up his folly. He leaned his elbows on the table and rested his head between

his hands, counting the beats of his temples. The cabin door opened and he saw the Hungarian standing in a shaft of grey light:

"Daybreak, gentlemen!"

## TWO GALLANTS

Corley and Lenehan, the adroit parasite, are discussing girls, and Corley relates his conquests. Lenehan escorts his friend to a rendezvous, then has a meal which costs him twopence-half-penny. He waits for Corley, and is just about to give him up in a rage when he appears and shows the gold coin he has wheedled out of the servant girl.

## THE BOARDING HOUSE

Mrs. Mooney, owner of a boarding house, gets ready to tackle the young man who has seduced her daughter.

A *tour de force* of technique, this story shifts the interest from mother to young man, and finally to daughter, without breaking its unity.

## A LITTLE CLOUD

A boastful Dubliner comes back to his maternal city. He is a journalist, and patronises his old friend, little Chandler, who would like to be a poet. They drink. Chandler prophesies that Gallaher will get married.

You'll get your head in the sack like everyone else if you can find the girl.

Chandler goes home, and is left to mind the baby while his wife goes out to get something. He reads Byron to himself. The baby begins to cry, and won't stop. He shouts at it, and it screams. His wife rushes in.

Little Chandler sustained for one moment the gaze of her eyes and his heart closed together as he met the hatred in them.

## COUNTERPARTS

A boozing, good for nothing clerk in a lawyer's office neglects his work, is rebuked, sauces his boss, then, aching for drink, pawns his watch and joins his friends. A music hall artist beats

him in a feat of strength. He goes home and starts to thrash his small son.

#### CLAY

A little woman of middle age, who works in a laundry, buys a cake to take to her brother's children, but loses it. Nobody minds: she is made very welcome, and at the end has to sing a song. She sings "I dreamt I dwelt in marble halls," and gives the same verse twice.

#### A PAINFUL CASE

Mr. James Duffy lives by himself in Chapelizod, "at a little distance from his body, regarding his own acts with doubtful side glances." He sits next a mother and daughter at a concert. He is attracted to the mother, and her husband encourages his visits, thinking he is after the daughter. The mother shows her feeling for him: he is shocked, and leaves her.

Four years later he sees an account of the inquest on her. She was knocked down while drunk on the railway.

Why had he withheld life from her? Why had he sentenced her to death? He felt that he was alone.

#### IVY DAY IN THE COMMITTEE ROOMS

Canvassers for one Richard Tierney in the municipal election sit in the cold committee room and disparage their candidate, who does not pay them what he owes. They prevail on the agent to send in some stout, after which one of them, Hyams, recites a ballad of his own composition, about Parnell.

#### A MOTHER

A convent-educated woman who "had become Mrs. Kearney out of spite" is approached for her daughter's services as accompanist at "four grand concerts." The first is poorly attended, and the artists are bad. The second is not much better, and the promoters abandon the third and concentrate on the last.

Mrs. Kearney insists that this does not affect the contract. Getting evasive replies, she refuses to let her daughter go on the



platform without her fee. She delays the concert. At last she is given four pounds—not guineas—and the concert starts.

In the interval, the organisers refuse to pay her any more till the concert is over. She argues and insults them. Someone else accompanies. She drives away in a rage, meekly followed by her daughter.

#### GRACE

Mr. Kernan, a commercial traveller, is found drunk and bleeding on the floor of a public lavatory. A friend rescues him from crowd and constable, and takes him home. His wife and three of his friends, one of them M'Coy, an ex-tenor of some reputation, whose wife is an ex-soprano, plot to take him to a retreat to cure his fatal drinking.

After a long theological talk, they take him to hear a sermon.

#### THE DEAD

Chief guests at the Miss Morkans' annual dance are Gabriel, their nephew, and his wife. The old ladies are musical: Kate gives piano lessons, Julia still sings, and their niece teaches too. Bartell D'Arcy, the tenor, is also a guest: but he has a cold, and refuses to sing.

Gabriel, worried about a speech he has to make, is taken to task by a fiery Nationalist called Miss Ivors for writing for the *Daily Express*. His wife asks him what the row is about: he says it was only that she wanted him to go to the west of Ireland, and he would not. His wife says she would love to see Galway again.

At supper, there is much talk of singers. Gabriel makes his speech. He is waiting for his wife to join him and leave, when he sees her on the stairs, listening. A voice, hoarse and uncertain, is singing an old Irish song. It is D'Arcy. The others press him to sing, but he says he is hoarse as a crow.

Gabriel feels love and desire for his wife. When they get to the hotel, he is ready to take her, but she does not respond. She tells him she is thinking of the song D'Arcy was singing, and how it reminds her of a boy who used to sing it, who loved her, and is long dead.

After she is asleep, he lies by her side, trying to understand and adjust himself to what has happened.

3

The themes that crop up in these stories, some of them in rudimentary form, run through the whole of Joyce's work. Two or three have a note of autobiography. Priests who have blundered, or died, remind us of the priest who blundered and died in Joyce, and underwent so strange a resurrection.<sup>1</sup> Singers who fail, or have a cold, remind us that Joyce's own singing voice was never heard to its best advantage. Boys whose dreams are not realised, and whose elders fail them; who watch ships and meet a pervert, who must wheedle money from a drunken elder in order to see the magic of the East at a bazaar, but get there too late; these are drawn surely from the boy who was to give, in his first novel, so devastating a portrait of his father—none the less devastating for its humour and affection.<sup>2</sup>

For the rest, Dubliners of many types are frustrated. The son of the tradesman cannot escape, either through the speed of the racing car, the music of the Hungarian, his father's money, or the ship. Dawn comes up beautiful in the Bay, but it brings a Dublin day, a realisation of folly and frustration which none of these things, not even drink, can ward off. A girl, restrained by fear, by her mother, and by the portrait of a priest, will not venture into the deep sea of love and feeling. A married woman is denied emotional outlet, now that Chapelized, *Chapelle d'Iseult*, no longer stands for romance. The middle-aged laundry worker wants to bring gifts, but she loses them, and cannot even remember the words of her second-hand dream of better things.

What is the good of pawning one's watch, getting rid of the hourglass that reminds one that time is passing, and drinking in order to forget time, if a music hall artist is to outdo one? What is the use of boasting and reading Byron, if one's baby

<sup>1</sup> Stephen Dedalus wished to be "a priest of the eternal imagination, transmuting the daily bread of experience into the radiant body of everliving life."

<sup>2</sup> "I was very fond of him always, and even liked his faults."

yells and one's wife hates one? What help is a bodily anodyne if it leads to public humiliation, and all that the worn-out makers of music can do is to lug one off to the priest? What comfort to have a beautiful wife, and to desire her, if she is apt to hear a voice from the past—"a voice from beyond the world was calling"—and the cold and sterile snow falls on the world of one's desire?

All these stories, except the last, are written in a straightforward, flat, naturalistic manner. Their debt to French sources is obvious. The influence of Zola is heavy on some of them, and others owe much to Flaubert. Compare, for instance, the last line of *Ivy Day in the Committee Rooms*,

Mr. Crofton said that it was a very fine piece of writing, its deliberate flattened anti-climax after the ballad, to the last line of *Hérodiade*, where the men are carrying Iokanaan's head:

Comme elle était très lourde, ils la portaient alternativement.

*The Dead* is on a different level. A poet's story, complete, final, beautiful, and extraordinarily moving, it sounds a note and opens a prospect which were to be developed in the later work, and to be the *motif*, the "voice from beyond the world", whose call Joyce heard more and more clearly.

The whole book is less a collection of short stories than a circular novel, with Dublin as its centre, in which can be seen studies for the later portraits, and a first statement of the themes that were to be made the great counterpoint and pattern of the later work.

4

The difficulty Joyce had with publishers over *Dubliners*, his angry struggles against their criticisms, are a familiar story, and need not concern us. What we must observe is the relationship of the book to its successors, and the astonishing development from it to work of a different order. His next book, *A*

*Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*,<sup>1</sup> an autobiographical novel, is important in itself—it is a small masterpiece—and because, in a single passage, Joyce foreshadows his own development as an artist, the interests that were to dominate him, and the direction of his whole life's work.

Novel and passage are well known. Even so, I will quote the passage, so that we may see clearly with what astonishing precision it lays down the artistic programme of a lifetime. Stephen Dedalus, the hero of the book, is walking on the sands by himself a few miles from Dublin:

He drew forth a phrase from his treasure and spoke it softly to himself:

—A day of dappled seaborne clouds.

The phrase and the day and the scene harmonised in a chord. Words. Was it their colours? He allowed them to glow and fade, hue after hue: sunrise gold, the russet and green of apple orchards, azure of waves, the greyfringed fleece of clouds. No, it was not their colours: it was the poise and balance of the period itself. Did he then love the rhythmic rise and fall of words better than their associations of legend and colour? Or was it that, being as weak of sight as he was shy of mind, he drew less pleasure from the reflection of the glowing sensible world through the prism of a language manycoloured and richly storied than from the contemplation of an inner world of individual emotions mirrored perfectly in a lucid supple periodic prose?

He passed from the trembling bridge on to firm land again. At that instant, as it seemed to him, the air was chilled; and looking askance towards the water he saw a flying squall darkening and crisping suddenly the tide. A faint click at his heart, a faint throb in his throat told him once more of how his flesh dreaded the cold infra-human odour of the sea: yet he did not strike across the downs on his left but held straight on along the spine of rocks that pointed against the river's mouth.

A veiled sunlight lit up faintly the grey sheet of water where the river was embayed. In the distance along the course of the slow-

<sup>1</sup> I am deliberately omitting *Stephen Hero*, the first version, because, interesting though it is, Joyce suppressed and superseded it. By and large, it is an extraverted treatment of the same autobiographical material, at far greater length.

flowing Liffey slender masts flecked the sky, and, more distant still, the dim fabric of the city lay prone in haze. Like a scene on some vague arras, old as man's weariness, the image of the seventh city of christendom was visible to him across the timeless air, no older nor more weary nor less patient of subjection than in the days of the thingmote.

Disheartened, he raised his eyes towards the slow-drifting clouds, dappled and seaborne. They were voyaging across the deserts of the sky, a host of nomads on the march, voyaging high over Ireland, westward bound. The Europe they had come from lay out there beyond the Irish Sea, Europe of strange tongues and valleyed and wood-begirt and citadelled and of entrenched and marshalled races. He heard a confused music within him as of memories and names which he was almost conscious of but could not capture even for an instant; then the music seemed to recede, to recede, to recede: and from each receding trail of nebulous music there fell always one longdrawn calling note, piercing like a star the dusk of silence. Again! Again! Again! A voice from beyond the world was calling.<sup>1</sup>

In this astonishing passage Joyce sets down the major themes of his life's work. First of all, there is the preoccupation with words themselves. The writer not only asks himself what they are and what they mean to him—a question he was never fully to answer—but begins to feel his way towards the associative multi-lingual vocabulary of *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake*. The words are the material for an incantation. Over and above "their associations of legend and colour", they are magical symbols. The clue to their magic will be found in the religious scenes, where the Latin words impress upon Stephen's fainting heart their more than symbolic meaning. "In the beginning was the Word:" to no part of the Scriptures can Joyce have given deeper assent. On no part of the writer's craft did he brood with so hieratic a concentration. Writing was for him a religious exercise, always: and his progress was, like many a

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Stuart Gilbert points out that this cadence owes something to the well-known song:

Dusk and the shadows falling  
O'er land and sea:  
Somewhere a voice is calling,  
Calling for me.

mystic's, from the external phase of imitation and good works to deeper and deeper faith and contemplation.

"The rhythmic rise and fall of words" is taken care of throughout this passage by a music and a suppleness of phrase which reveals the singer, long before music is mentioned. It is "a confused music", and, significantly, it is "within him". The "voice from beyond the world" which finally calls to him does so on a sustained musical note, "one longdrawn calling note, piercing like a star the dusk of silence." It is the one clear voice of the "nebulous music" made up of "memories and names which he was almost conscious of but could not capture" and which recedes the moment he tries to bring it into consciousness. That is to be his task—to explore that inner world, to listen for and to capture that nebulous music. How? By association. Where does the word nebulous come from? The nomadic clouds of a few lines before, receding, westward bound. Yes, it will have to be a musical quest, for he is "weak of sight". Colour will come to mean less and less to him.

For the rest, he is by the mouth of the Liffey, near Dublin, which is as "a scene" on an "arras" (*Hamlet*), "the seventh city of christendom." He can never escape Dublin or Christendom, though he leave them both, and spell the second with a small c. The air through which he sees these things is "timeless" (in his last work he did his best to be free from time), and the harsh Danish word "thingmote", bringing the reader up sharply at the sentence's end, comes not only from the Danes who sailed up the Liffey till they were driven from it at Clontarf, but from Hamlet the Dane, and from the Scandinavia which was Ibsen's home.

There is no need to go on examining this amazing programme. It shows that, unconsciously at any rate, Joyce foresaw and understood his life's work. In a novel which is in itself a great achievement, he reached out to the work that was to make him a world figure, one of the great writers of all time.

I do not propose at this late date to say anything general about *Ulysses*. Accounts of the book have been given by Mr.

Stuart Gilbert, Mr. Frank Budgen, Mr. Louis Golding, and many others. It has been charted and mapped, and no reader nowadays need experience any difficulties with it. Among writers and students of literature it is widely recognised as a masterpiece. It was saluted from the appearance of its first chapters by acute critics, chief among them Virginia Woolf and Rebecca West. Its influence on the practice of subsequent novelists has been enormous. No novel of this century would seem to have so great a chance of incorporation into the great body of the English novel.

The one point to which I can bear witness is worth mentioning, since no one can speak of it who was not acquainted with the Dublin of which Joyce wrote. Both *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* and *Ulysses* evoke with magical accuracy the atmosphere and the sensations of that vanished city. To read either is to be back again in childhood and boyhood, seeing and hearing and smelling with the clarity of uncorrupted sense, victim of a nostalgia which must last as long as there is a mind to feel it. The priest-like austerity with which Joyce cut short his intake of material at that crucial day in June 1904 was rewarded by the preservation, intact and pristine, of those early impressions of Dublin, to the development of which all subsequent sense impressions were devoted, and which his powers of expression enabled him to fix upon the timeless page.

To bear witness to this power and this fidelity may not be a legitimate exercise of criticism, since the knowledge on which it is based is local and must vanish; but in the circumstances it is all that I can do.

6

No book of the century has caused more discussion than *Ulysses*. Pages could be filled with the names of the critics and writers who have commented on it, and a volume with their comments. A handful may be of interest here.

Apart from questions of technique, most of them deal with the character of Bloom, the Dublin Jew who is Stephen's spiritual father, *Ulysses* to his *Telemachus*. Miss West proclaims his

universality, averring that in him something is said about man.<sup>1</sup> Mr. G. W. Stonier supports her.<sup>2</sup>

Joyce has created here a 'universal character (the only one in modern fiction) and elaborated a prose texture, between day-dreaming and a mental cash-register, which at its best is capable of bringing into the novel material hitherto undreamt of. In Bloom he escapes completely the self-infatuation shown by Dedalus, and is able to project a side of himself with detachment, despite the subjective method . . . Bloom is the deuterio-Joyce, the externalising genius without which Joyce would never have been more than a minor poet.

Joyce's own comment is that Bloom is "a complete man—a good man."<sup>3</sup>

Finally, a most valuable and penetrating comment by Mr. Edwin Muir. Joyce, he says,

. . . tries to set in the plane of low comedy . . . professional seriousness of all kinds, and secondly the objects about which people are serious in this way: religion, to which the comic reaction is blasphemy; patriotism, to which it is little less; literature, to which it is parody . . . sex, to which it is obscenity. When comedy attempts to become universal it has perforce to include blasphemy and obscenity, for these are the two poles of comedy, just as the soul and the body are the two poles of human existence. To see religion with the eye of comedy is not, of course, to laugh it out of existence, any more than to see sex comically is to destroy it. All that comedy can destroy is strictly the second-rate.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *The Strange Necessity*.

<sup>2</sup> *Gog Magog*.

<sup>3</sup> FRANK BUDGEN: *James Joyce and the Making of Ulysses*.

<sup>4</sup> *In Transition*.



### CHAPTER III

**B**EFORE going further into an examination of what Mr. J. C. Powys has called "Joyce's mature style", it may be helpful to look at the ways in which, at different stages in his artistic development, he used one main line of interest, his love of vocal music. With a writer whose development was so consistent, and who so strictly limited his material, attention to a single thread can yield characteristic results.

We start with the fact of Joyce's tenor voice and his severe delight in using it. Inheriting the gift from his father, he took it seriously, and subjected it to discipline. He sang at concerts in Dublin, and, doubtless influenced by the success of John McCormack, entered for the tenor competition at the Feis Ceoil, or National Festival, a year after McCormack's victory.<sup>1</sup> The set pieces he sang admirably, and success was in his pocket, when his character intervened. The third item required of each candidate was a sight-reading test. This Joyce refused, on the grounds that it was inartistic and absurd to expect anyone to render a classical song at sight.

It has been suggested that he was bad at sight-reading, and wished to avoid a failure. If that were the case, why did he enter for the competition? He must have known the conditions. Was it exhibitionism? Artistic integrity? A desire to protest publicly against a regulation of which he disapproved? At any rate, he walked off the platform, leaving the puzzled Signor Arditi to shrug his shoulders and name another competitor as the winner.

The poems are obviously musical, lyrics in the Jacobean manner. In *Dubliners*, as we have seen, there is a good deal about singing and singers. *Clay* gets its final effect from the

<sup>1</sup>In the first edition of my portrait sketch of McCormack, I was guilty of a double misstatement about Joyce's entry, based on information which I afterwards discovered to be wrong.

contrast between the little middle-aged laundry worker and the song she sings—"I dreamt I dwelt in Marble Halls". Joyce makes her go wrong in it, and sing the first verse twice. *A Painful Case* contains an interesting hint of future developments. Mr. Duffy lives in Chapelizod, i.e. Chapelle d'Iseult. We have seen the significance of Tristan and Isolda in *Finnegans Wake*, and can guess the answer to Mr. Levin's question why Joyce should have called the lady in the story, Mrs. Sinico, after one of his singing masters.

*A Mother* makes a series of concerts the background to a vicious character study. No singer is named, except the unfortunate Madame Glyn, "from London", whose timid voice comes to grief in *Killarney*. (Typically, Joyce makes no comment on her choice of this song for an Irish audience.) There is a barbed line about the second tenor who, at his third attempt, won the bronze medal at the Feis Ceoil, Joyce getting in a couple of backhanders at that institution: and, implicit in the book's title, a general aspersion upon musical activities in Dublin.

But the story in which singing plays the strongest role is *The Dead*. I have summarised it already, but let me do it once more, from the special point of view I am adopting. One of the old ladies gives piano lessons, the other still sings, the niece gives lessons too. A tenor named Bartell d'Arcy is among the guests at their party. He is said to be conceited: in any case, he has a cold, and refuses to sing. He takes part, however, in a discussion about singers, and extols Caruso, whom he claims to be as good as any tenor of past days. Several singers are named in the discussion, and at last one of the old guard says the best tenor in his recollection was one Parkinson. Bartell d'Arcy replies coldly that he never heard of him.

But all this is incidental, leading up to the climax of the story. Gabriel, released and emotional after making his speech, is waiting for his wife. She appears at the stairhead, where she stands, listening to something. In the distance a tenor voice is heard, hoarse and uncertain, trying an old Irish air. It is Bartell d'Arcy. Gabriel takes his wife to their hotel, full of desire for her, but she is withdrawn and unresponsive. It turns out that the song has

reminded her of a boy who loved her once, and is dead: and the story ends on an elegiac note, Gabriel realising how little he has known his wife, and thinking of the snow that falls over Ireland. Here, for the first time, Joyce's feeling for song ceases to be incidental, and is integrated into the fabric of his prose to secure an emotional effect.

*A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* makes less mention of music, and no such use of it for purposes of narrative. Instead, it has passed into the writing, which in many places is purely musical. See, for example, the passage already quoted on pp. 24, 25.

It is worth noting, however, that among the first of the childhood memories with which the book opens are a song and a dance tune; that Stephen sang when he was ill, that his father sang continually, and made it his first boast that he could sing a tenor song against any man; that Stephen often had to sing at home and at parties; that the children sang *Oft in the Stilly Night* in harmony; that one of Stephen's deeper emotions was caused by hearing a waltz in the gymnasium; that there are frequent references to music, both technical—"a major third", "a diminished fourth"—and general; and that one of the vital incidents in the very important discussion with Cranly is the voice of the servant girl singing *Sweet Rosie O'Grady*. Throughout the book, music, and words rhythmically and musically used, share with religion in begetting and expressing the deepest and sharpest emotions felt by Stephen: and, whereas he labours to free himself from the grip of the Church, he makes no such resistance against the power of music.

2

*Ulysses* is full of references to singers and to vocal music. Some of the singers, e.g. John McCormack, the baritone J. C. Doyle, and the luckless Walter Bapty, are mentioned by name. Others appear in character: Simon Dedalus (tenor), Ben Dollard (bass), Marion Bloom, and, in her musings, Bartell d'Arcy. Ireland in Joyce's day was rich in singers. Foli had retired, and so for all practical purposes had the tenor Barton M'Guckin,

though he still coached and produced. Joseph O'Mara was touring in opera, Denis O'Sullivan spent most of his time in England, as did his fellow bass, Harry Plunket Greene. Chief of the resident singers was the baritone William Ludwig (Ledwidge), who, if he had cared to leave Ireland, could have won an international reputation.<sup>1</sup> In Dublin, the standard of technical performance was far above the musical quality of the work performed: a circumstance which probably encouraged Joyce to take the purely technical view of singing that he did. That he so regarded it is shown by his famous eulogy of Sullivan, whom he claimed to be the greatest tenor in the world, on the strength of his singing of Rossini's *Guillaume Tell*.

He has the most wonderful voice in the world. It is not the sweetest voice, but he can do with it more than any man alive can do with his voice. This tenor part has never been sung in its entirety since the days of Tamagno, nearly forty years ago . . .

. . . I have been through the score . . . and I discover that Sullivan sings 456 G's, 93 A flats, 92 A's, 54 B flats, 15 B's, 19 C's, and 2 C sharps. Nobody else can do it.

This statistical appraisal is characteristic of an artist whose approach to the problems of art was at once technical and highly moralised. The objection that it reduces the art of singing to a species of acrobatics Joyce would have brushed aside. To him the difficulties to be overcome were like the moral hurdles set himself by an ascetic. Rossini's score is seen as a series of peaks to be surmounted with ever-increasing effort.

Mr. Frank Budgen tells how Joyce sang to the conductor at the *Stadttheater* in Zürich the tenor romanza from *Fedora*:

*Amor ti vieta  
Di non amar  
La man tua lieve  
Che mi respinge . . .*

Joyce said it was "to put him up to some of the commoner mistakes his chorus was likely to make in singing Italian . . .

<sup>1</sup> John McCormack told me that, when he spoke admiringly to Sir (then Mr.) Henry Wood after a performance of the *Elijah* by Clarence Whitehill, the conductor said he had never heard Ludwig's rendering surpassed.

I wanted to show the vocal necessity for putting an atonic vowel between two consonants . . . It would be impossible to sing that 'respinge' without interpolating a vowel breath between the 'n' and the 'g.'

On another occasion, Joyce told Mr. Budgen that he had been working hard all day (on *Ulysses*) and had written two sentences. No, he was not seeking the *mot juste*. He had the words.

"What I am seeking is the perfect order of words in the sentence."

He explained the passage he was writing, with its two main themes, and quoted the sentences:

Perfume of embraces all him assailed. With hungered flesh obscurely, he mutely craved to adore.

"You can see for yourself," he added, "in how many different ways they might be arranged."

In *Ulysses*, Joyce carried his use of musical ideas a long way further than in his previous work. The *Sirens* episode unites the use of song to evoke emotion with a musical technique of writing. Many critics have pointed out the collection of themes in the opening pages of this episode, which are unintelligible except in relation to what follows. In spite of all that has been said about this episode being a contrapuntal development of these opening pages, I agree with Mr. Levin that they are a condensed prelude to what follows: or, to put it even more simply, they are a verbal overture. The overture to the opera *Martha* consists of quotations from the arias and concerted numbers that are to follow, a fact to bear in mind, since the centrepiece of the episode is Simon Dedalus's singing of the tenor romanza *M'appari tutt' amor*. Joyce is forever using phrases as *leitmotifs*, carrying them over from one book to another.<sup>1</sup> Here he is rather making a preliminary statement of the themes that are to be treated in the episode. As it stands, the opening passage is a meaningless

<sup>1</sup> *Ulysses*: Good morning . . . have you used Pears' Soap? *Finnegans Wake*: Guld modning . . . have yous viewsed Piers' Aube? *Ulysses*: Die, dog. Little dog, die. *Finnegans Wake*. Die, Eve. Little Eve, die. Etc. etc. etc.

*resumé* of the episode, a speaker's notes for his speech. From the particular point of view which is here engaging our attention, the important point is that many of the notes and phrases in this polythematic overture are direct references to music, and especially to vocal music.

Once the episode proper starts, that is, the writing to which the opening phrases are an overture and which develops and makes them intelligible, it progresses logically step by step. The blind piano tuner has been in and tuned the piano. "A voiceless song" is heard. Then, "high, a high note pealed in the treble, clear." The three singers gather round it—"Boomed crashing chords." Cowley, Simon Dedalus, and Ben Dollard talk of music and concerts. Cowley sings a phrase or two from the tenor romance from *Martha*. Richie Goulding says it is the most beautiful tenor air ever written, and speaks of Joseph Maas and of Barton McGuckin. Simon Dedalus then sings the aria. The dramatic use of the song is to call up memories and thoughts in Bloom, who sits listening. Sometimes the voices are heard directly, but for the most part they come through the current of Bloom's thought, and we hear the singing at one remove, in quotation. Beginning obviously, with suggestion, the name of the opera chiming with Martha Clifford the typist, to whom he is writing a letter, the singing draws more and more on Bloom's emotional reservoir. He is reminded that his wife is a singer, and the climax of the aria, which Simon sings in English, confronts him with his sense of guilt. Goulding extols Simon's singing on a past occasion, and discusses the voice production of one Barraclough. One of the barmaids holds a shell to George Lidwell's ear. Bloom, musing on this and on his letter, recalls the fate of the tenor Walter Bapty. He switches his mind sharply back to the shell. "The sea they think they hear. Singing. A roar. The blood it is."

Bloom thinks of chamber music ("Could make a kind of pun on that. It is a kind of music I often thought when she. Acoustics that is. Tinkling. Empty vessels make the most noise . . . Like those rhapsodies of Liszt's . . . Pearls. Drops. Rain. Diddle . . . Hiss . . .").

Ben Dollard, "base barreltone", goes to sing. Cowley asks

him for Sarastro's second aria from *The Magic Flute*, but Kernan wants an Irish tune, *The Croppy Boy*.

"What key? Six sharps?"

"F sharp major," Ben Dollard said.

All this time, the undercurrent of Bloom's thought, stimulated by sounds and by the visual phallic imagery of the beer-pulls, a conductor's baton, etc., has been playing upon the secret appointment between Blazes Boylan, who has left early in the episode, and his wife at Bloom's home, 7 Eccles Street. Ben Dollard's singing of *The Croppy Boy* awakes further poignant memories. It recalls another patriotic song, which his mind adapts to the present( "Who fears to speak of nineteen four?"). Its name is *The Memory of the Dead*, and soon a line of Dollard's song,

I alone am left of my name and race,

combines with it to recall to him his lost son, Rudy. Another theme of the song, confession, has an even more immediate application.

*Bless me, father*, Dollard the croppy cried. *Bless me and let me go.*  
Tap.

Bloom looked, unblessed to go.

As he rises, there is a second reminder (Miss Douce caressing the beer-pull) of what is happening at 7 Eccles Street, and the tap of the blind piano-tuner's stick combines with the discreet tap of the knocker which announced Boylan's arrival there.

Before Bloom has gone, Dollard finishes the ballad, to a burst of praise, Cowley comparing him to the almost legendary bass Lablache. More songs are mentioned, as Bloom, now identified with Lionel, hero of the opera *Martha*, goes to post his letter to Martha Clifford: and the episode ends with a reference to Meyerbeer and a further quotation from *The Memory of the Dead*, blended with an utterance of Robert Emmet, of whom he has been reminded by seeing a picture of him in Lionel Marks's window, which in its turn is punctuated by the digestive noises of Bloom's stomach.

This is a quick examination of the main themes of a chapter which could be analysed in far greater detail: and it raises the question whether Joyce has gained anything by so elaborate an attempt to make his knowledge of vocal music the basis of an episode designed to correspond to the Homeric episode of *The Sirens*. The appeal of the Sirens was in their song, and it is appropriate that this stage of Bloom's journey should be concerned with singing. But are we the better off, as readers, for the fact that Joyce has worked it out in such detail? Does the overture add to our understanding of the episode proper?

Clearly, it does not serve the purpose of an overture, since it means nothing until we have read the episode. Far from whetting our appetite, it induces a blank stupefaction. After we have read the episode, its meaning becomes clear, and it may perhaps even be of some help towards a re-reading. But does it help by being stuck in front? And are musical phrases translatable into words, except by crude onomatopaea?

In a word, has Joyce the artist been elbowed aside by Joyce the pedant?

In this connection, it is well to remember that Jung has said that *Ulysses* can be read in either direction, backwards or forwards. This is an exaggeration, for, though the general picture is static, the book is arranged in the normal time sequence, from morning to night. There is progression of character, too. Both Bloom and Stephen are different at the day's end: their experiences have added to them. Some at least of Stephen's hallucinatory visions depend on what has happened earlier in the day: for example, the line of Blake, recollected at Mr. Deasy's, which is woven into the nightmare farrago of his imaginings. Paddy Dignam's funeral colours many of Bloom's subsequent musings, and his emotional response to Blazes Boylan's visit to Eccles Street depends to a real degree upon the clock. Jung's statement must therefore not be taken too literally.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jung himself would be the last to do so. He has always been at pains to qualify even his own definitions, and to prevent his disciples from taking them too seriously.



It remains broadly true, however, that *Ulysses* is a panorama. The traveller does not go far afield. He goes round and round in his native city, round and round inside his own skull, round and round in the narrow circle of his fears, his hopes, and his desires. If, then, Jung's statement holds at all, it may apply to a part as well as to the whole. At all events, we should allow Joyce the benefit of the doubt. In approaching a new technique, we should take nothing for granted, not even our dearest prejudices.

Yet, when we have allowed all this, it is difficult to see how, in the specific instance of the verbal overture, any literary or narrative effect has been gained. Joyce puts it before the passage of which it is a thematic summary. Granted, he had to put it somewhere: but we may fairly assume that he put it in front for a definite purpose, and in order to gain a definite effect. Has he gained it? Is the overture anything more than an attempt to parallel in words the practice of music; an attempt remarkable more for its detailed ingenuity than for any effect it produces even upon the painstaking and attentive reader? These are questions which each reader must answer for himself. I am bound to say that, for me, the opening passage remains an interesting but unsuccessful experiment, doomed to failure because words and phrases cannot stand by themselves, apart from their meaning. Apart from their meaning, they are noises only.<sup>1</sup> At best, their musical effect, as sequences of consonants and vowels, is far more limited than that of musical tones. Such attempts as have been made to reproduce phrases of musical notation in words have been inadequate and unsatisfactory, except in so far as the meaning of the words chosen has seemed to agree in spirit with the music.

Another Irishman, Tom Moore, could have told Joyce a good deal about the problem, and Joyce certainly gave Moore's work his very close attention; but Moore had the easier task. His success was unique: it is hard to read some of the Irish Melodies without hearing the tune: but Moore had a complete

<sup>1</sup> A school of writing exists to disprove this: but I cannot accept any theory which divorces words from what they mean as the names of objects, qualities, or ideas.

air to work upon, and proposed to himself the task of setting to it words which would suit a lyric tenor voice.

3

In *Finnegans Wake*, the use of music and singing seems at first to have regressed to superficial association and word amalgams. Then we see that it is part of the very fabric of the book: not only a means of expression, but symbol and substance. Allusions to songs, singing, and singers are even more abundant than in *Ulysses*. Take the singers first. Sometimes there is criticism in the allusions: "Jean Sous-levin" gives us Sullivan's heroic volume and dramatic force, plus his success in France: "Joan MockComic" characterises the feminine quality of the lyric tenor voice (compare Ralph Hodgson's line about Moore's "sad and rather female song"), and digs waspishly at the famous tenor's humour and popularity. "Romeoreszk" identifies the singer with one of his best parts. "Michaelen Kelly" is clear enough, and "Mara O'Mario" suggests a comparison which would have mightily pleased Joseph O'Mara, if not the older singer. The names are not always given so directly: "What Sim sobs todie I'll reeve tomorrey." Why Sims Reeves should be accused of lachrymose singing is not clear, unless perhaps the allusion is to Edgar's protracted farewell in *Lucia di Lammermoor*. Barton McGuckin and Walter Wheatley are amongst the other tenors mentioned by name.

Allusions to songs are legion. A number will be found at the end of the chapter: but in the same passage as the Reeves allusion we get "Tune in, tune on, old Tighe" ("Turn on, old Time," a trio from *Maritana*): it is followed by references to two popular songs, *MacSorly's Twins* and *Mother o' Mine*: "How is your napper, Handy, and hownow does shestand?" (*The Wearing of the Green*): "Shaunti and shaunti and shaunti again" (*The Cruiskeen Laun*) leads to Moore's *The Coolin* ("Coolinder") and *The Rising of the Moon*: "I heard the man shee shinging in the pantry bay. Down among the dustbins let him lie!" (*Mary of Argyle, Oft has the banshee cried, Bantry Bay, Down among the Dead Men*). These are followed by allusions to *Whisper and*

*I shall Hear, Excelsior, and Stride la Vampa* (from *Il Trovatore*). "Nanon L'Escaut" is plain sailing, *La Calumnia è un Vermicelli* is a mildly funny perversion of the famous bass aria. "You're sitting on me style, maybe, whereoft I helped you ore" is a happy variant on the opening line of *The Irish Emigrant*: and we get more than one aspect of a village dance in *Arms arome, side aside, face into the wall. To the tumble of the tossed tot the trouble of the swaddled, O,*" which makes free with the refrain of Percy French's immortal *Phil the Fluter's Ball*.

In a more complex sentence,

How (from the sublime to the ridiculous) times oft and oft, my fortune, shall we think with deepest love and recollection by rintrospection of thee but we're far away on the pillow, breathing fondly o'er my names all through the empties, whilst moidered by the rattle of the doppeldoorknockers,

Schubert probably represents the sublime, and the allusions to Tosti's *Parted* and other Victorian ballads do duty for the ridiculous, with Father Prout (*The Bells of Shandon*) somewhere in between. The idea of the Doppelgänger was bound to fascinate Joyce: it crops up eighty pages later as "doblinganger".

*The West's Awake* appears in low company: "and odd lots have fun at Flannagen's Ball. Till Irinwakes from Slumber Deep." *John Peel* is made to appear "With his coat so greye, And his pounds that he pawned from the burning." *Home Sweet Home* is twisted into a sneer at the Catholic Church—"No martyr where the preature is there's no plagues like rome." There is an echo of the Sirens' episode in *Ulysses*:

To stir up love's young fizz I | tilt this bridle's cup champagne,  
dimming douce from her peepair of hideseeks, tight-squeezed on my  
snowybrusted and while my pearlies in their sparking wisdom are  
rippling her bubblets I swear (and let you swear) by the bumper  
round . . .

This is interesting as an example of the various levels of musical association. The clue is the allusion to Miss Douce the barmaid. Given that, we see at once that the eight opening monosyllables

recall the opening phrase of *In Cellar Cool*, "base-barreltone" song *par excellence*, with its range of two octaves, just as "this bridle's cup champagne" recalls the rhythm of *Drink To Me Only*. *Love's Young Dream* of Tom Moore fits in happily with *The Snowy-Breasted Pearl* ("Our native Doric"), an air natural in any consideration of the barmaid, whose bosom dominates the rest of the sentence; but must not make us miss a further train of thought: Irish tenor song—Sullivan—pearlies (pearl eyes)—*Take a Pair of Sparkling Eyes*. "Pearlies" also suggests the coster songs which Joyce enjoyed.

Nothing but fatigue can stop the industrious reader from collecting instances of this sort of thing up and down *Finnegans Wake*. (He will get a fillip or a bellyful at the end of this chapter.)

Personally, I think Joyce never turned his interest in singing to better use than in *The Dead*. He attempted more in the Sirens' episode, but got no such poignant and powerful effect. However, we must not compare two totally dissimilar efforts: and, since in the above and similar passages Joyce is merely applying to musical ideas and allusions the general associative method of the entire book, the question whether he has thereby gained any effect of value to the reader can be deferred until the method is considered as a whole.

4

There remains the question of the degree to which Joyce's experience as a singer has influenced the phrasing of his sentences. Here one turns naturally to the more musical passages, and particularly to the conclusion of the *Anna Livia* episode. Joyce's own reading of this, fortunately preserved on a gramophone record, shows beyond doubt that a singer wrote the lines. Again and again the breathing, the curve of the phrase, the delicately graded flow of tone belong to singing. Irish poets almost always tend to chant their verses, but this is something more.

Ho! Are you not gone ahome? *What Tom Malone?* . . . I feel as old as yonder elm. A tale told of Shaun or Shem? All Livia's daughtersons. Dark hawks hear us. Night! Night! My ho head

halls. I feel as heavy as yonder stone. Tell me of John or Shaun? Who were Shem and Shaun the living sons or daughters of? Night now! Tell me, tell me, tell me, elm! . . .

Joyce's reading of this, kept within a small compass of exquisitely modulated tones, is the performance of a tenor singer: and it is reasonable to suppose that the lines so read were written to be so read, and according to the principles exemplified in the reading. Anyone who has learned to sing a phrase, to manage his breath, to grade his tone, to give emphasis or colour to the telling word, will get from Joyce's phrasing a peculiar delight. He will recognise at once the man who wrote not only to be spoken, as a poet might, but to be given by the voice with loving, lingering care for vowel and consonant; to be sung.

It is odd to be afraid of reading too much into Joyce, when so often one misses at least half of his allusions: but I suggest that anyone who takes the trouble to get the score of Verdi's *Otello*, and compares the love duet at the end of the first act, in particular *Otello's* solo passages, with the last but two and last but one paragraphs of the *Anna Livia* episode, will discover some very interesting similarities in phrasing.<sup>1</sup>

That this kind of thing is intentional is shown by the frequent paraphrases (I have quoted examples) of lines and phrases from songs. We do not normally quote the words of a song without remembering the air, and may be sure that Joyce never did so. This, rather than the results of his musical erudition, is the gift which Joyce's enthusiasm for singing gave to his writing. The erudition was a part of Joyce's character. It made a basis and a background for the musical side of his writing: and, when that love of music passed into the writing itself, Joyce, like Moore before him, became a lyricist, and, going further than Moore, a setter of words to unheard melodies, a singer who went beyond the boundaries of his art.

5

There follows a selection of references to songs and singing, which may amuse readers with a taste for these things:

<sup>1</sup> It is perhaps more than a coincidence that Sullivan was celebrated for his performance of *Otello*.

p. 6, l. 13 Macool, Macool, orra whyi deed ye diie? [The last line of *Molly Brannigan*.]

p. 18, l. 2 Meldundleize! [Mild und Leise, the first words of *Isolde's Liebestod*.]

p. 22, l. 29 For like the campbells acoming with a fork lance of lightning, Jarl von H oother Boanerges himself, the old terror of the dames . . .

p. 31, l. 29 For he kinned Jom pill with his court so gray and his haunts in his house in the mourning.

p. 38, l. 9 Our cad's bit of strife (knee Bareniece Maxwelton) . . .

p. 38, l. 21 . . . whom she had been meaning in her mind primarily to speak with (hosch, intra! jist a timblespoon!) trusting, between cuppled lips and annie lawrie promises (mighshe never have Esne-kerry pudden come Hunanov for her pecklapitschens!) that the gossip so delivered in his epistolear . . .

p. 40 O'Mara, an ex private secretary of no fixed abode (locally known as Mildew Lisa) . . . [Joseph O'Mara, a famous Irish tenor, often sang *Tristan*.]

p. 48, l. 13 . . . a choir of the O'Daley O'Doyles doublesixing the chorus in Fenn MacCall and the Serven Feeries of Loch Neach, Galloper Trappler and Hurleyquinn the zitherer of the past with his merry-men all, zimzim, zimzim.

p. 61, l. 16 Questa and Puella ["Questa o quella," opening of the Duke's first aria in *Rigoletto*.]

p. 64, l. 3 . . . said war' prised safe in bed as he dreamed that he'd wealthes in mormon halls when wokenp by a a fourth loud snore out of his land of byelo . . .

p. 71, l. 7 . . . Firstnighter, Informer, Old Fruit, Yellow Whigger, Wheareears, Goldy Geit, Bogside Beauty, Yass We've Had His Badannas, York's Porker, Funnyface . . . [Many other song titles follow.]

p. 74, l. 9 Silence was in thy faustic hells, O Tringa, when thy green words went dry but there will be sounds of manymuth on the nights car ringing . . . [Allusions to Moore's *Silent*, O Moyle and *Oft in the Stilly Night*."]

p. 78, l. 18 . . . had not been three monads in his watery grave (what vigilantes and ridings then and spuitwyne pledges eith aardappel

frittling!) when portfifaction, dreyfussed as ever, began to famp, ramp, ramp, the boys are parching.

p. 79, l. 22 (Tip!) Wells she'd woo and wills she's win but how the deer knowed where she'd marry!

l. 25 Kate Strong. [Susan Strong, the soprano, sang Wagnerian roles, and French opera and *chansons*. There are allusions to both themes in the pages that follow.]

p. 82, l. 9 Let me go, Pantheon! I hardly know ye.

p. 90, l. 22 Briefly, how such beginall finally struck him now? Like the crack that bruck the bank in Multifarnham.

p. 92, l. 18 . . . legando round his nice new neck for him and pizzicagnoling his woolywags, with their dindy dandy sugar de candy mechree me postheen flowns courier to belive them of all his untiring young dames and send treats in their times. [*Mother Machree, The Cruiskeen Lawn, Believe me if all . . .*]

p. 95, l. 6 Ah dearome forsailoshe! Gone over the bays! When ginabawdy meadabawdy!

p. 104, l. 115 Thus we hear of, The Augusta Angustissimost for Old Seabeastius' Salvation, Rockabill Booby in the Wave Trough, Here's to the Relicts of All Decencies, Anna Stessa's Rise to Notice, Knickle Down Duddy Gunne and Arishe Sir Cannon, My Golden One and My Selver Wedding . . . [and so on for the following two pages 105 and 106.]

p. 110, l. 22 . . . Premver a promise of a pril when, as kischabrigies sang life's old sahatson, an iceclad shiverer, merest of bantlings observed a cold fowl behaviourising strangely on that fatal midden . . .

p. 116, l. 12 We can recall, with voluntears, the froggy jew, and sweeter far 'twere now westhinks in Dumbil's fair city ere one more year is o'er.

p. 139, l. 16 When I turn meoptics, from suchurban prospects, 'tis my filial's bosom, doth behold with pride, that pontificator, and circumvellator, with his dam night garrulous, slipt by his side . . . [Followed by further recollections of *The Bells of Shandon*.]

p. 147, l. 24 a crumb of my cake for each chasta dieva [Casta Diva, aria from *Norma*].

p. 148, l. 33 If you met on the binge a poor acheseyeld from Ailing . . . [*The Irish Exile*, of Campbell, and Moore's *I saw from the beach*.]

*p. 152, l. 30* As he set off with his father's sword, his lancia spezzata, he was hirded on . . . [*The Minstrel Boy.*]

*p. 153, l. 6* And as it rinn it dribbled like any purliteasy : My, my, my ! Me and me ! Little down dream don't I love thee !

*p. 158, l. 19.* It was so duusk that the tears of night began to fall . . .

*p. 176, l. 1* . . . games like Thom Thom the Thonderman, Put the Wind up the Peeler, Hat in the Ring, Hely Baba and the Forty Thieves, Mikel on the Luckypig, Nickel in the Slot, Sheila Hornett and her Cow, Adam and Ell, Humble Bumble, Moggies on the Wall, Twos and Threes, American Jump, Fox come out of your Den, Broken Bottles . . . [And so on with a list of musical nursery games.]

*p. 180, l. 5* . . . he squealed the topsqall im Deal Lil Shemlockup Yellin . . . infinitely better than Baraton McGluckin. [Barton McGuckin was a tenor, not a baritone.]

*p. 190, l. 34* . . . an Irish emigrant the wrong way out, sitting on your crooked sixpenny stile . . .

*p. 192, l. 22* Oft in the smelly night will they wallow for a clutch of the famished hand, I say, them bearded jezabelles you hired to rob you, while on your sodden straw impolitely you encored . . .

*p. 199, l. 26* And then she'd esk to vistule a hymn, The Heart Bowed Down or The Rakes of Mallow or Chelli Michele's La Calumnia è un Vermicelli or a balfy bit ov old Jo Robidson.

*p. 211, l. 33* . . . a guilty goldeny bellows, below me blow me for Ida Ida and a hushaby rocker Elletrouvetout for Who is silvier—Where is he ?

*p. 227, l. 11* All run-away sheep bound back bopeep, trailing their teenes behind them.

*p. 232, l. 13* Isle wail for yews, O doherlynt.

*p. 234, l. 6* But, Sin Showpanza, could anybroddy which walked this world with eyes whiteopen have looked twinsomer than the kerl he left behind him ? Candidatus, viridosus, aurilucens, sinelab ? Of all the green heroes everwore coton breiches, the whitest, the goldenest !

*p. 236, l. 10* We'll sing a song of Singlemonth and you'll too and you'll. Here are notes. There's the key. One two three. Chorus ! So come on, ye wealthy gentrymen wibfrufrocksfull of fun ! Thin, thin ! thin thin ! Thej olly and thelively, thou billy with thee coo,



for to jog a jig of a crispness nice and sing a missal too. Hip champouree! Hiphip champouree! O you longtailed blackman, polk it up behind me! Hip champouree! Hiphip champouree! And jessies, push the pumkik round. Anneliuiia!

p. 238, l. 11 We will be constant (what a word!) and bless the day, for whole hours too, yes, for sold long syne as we shall be heing in our created being of ours elvishness, the day you befell, you dreadful temptation!

p. 242, l. 29 Psing a psalm of pssexpeans, apocryphul of rhyme.

p. 246, l. 20 And vamp, vamp, vamp, the girls are merchand.

p. 252, l. 25 Charley, you're my darwing.

p. 257, l. 31 The play thou schouwburgst, Game, here endeth. The curtain drops by deep request. [The hymn: "The day Thou gavest, Lord, is ended."]

p. 272, l. 9 Stop, if you are a sally of the allies, hot off minnowaurs and naval actiums, picked engagements and banks of rowers.

p. 273, l. 8 So wrap up your worries in your woe (wumpumtum!) and shake down the shuffle for the throw. For there's one more ope for down-fall ned.

p. 286, l. 15 Dear hearts of my counting. [MOORE: *Dear harp of my country.*]

p. 296, l. 13 Are you right there Michael, are you right? Do you think you can hold on by sitting tight? . . . Ay, I'm right here, Nickel, and I'll write. Singing the top line why it suits me mighty fine . . . [Percy French's famous song leading into a plantation song.]

p. 297, l. 20 For addn't we to gayatsee with Puhl the Punkah's bell?

p. 300, footnote 3 Bag bag blockcheap, have you any will?

p. 305, l. 31 For auld lang salvy steyne.

p. 311, l. 5 It was long after once there was a lealand in theluffing ore it was less after lives thor a toyer in the tawn . . .

p. 317, l. 35 . . . (do you kend yon peak with its coast so green?)

p. 320, l. 19 How he hised his bungle oar his shourter and cut the pinter off his pourer and lay off for Fellagulphia in the farning. [Off to Philadelphia.]

p. 321, l. 17 And old lotts have funn at Flammagen's ball. Till Irin, wakes from Slumber Deep.

*p. 322, l. 14* Chorus: With his coate so graye. And his pounds that he pawned from the burning.

*p. 329, l. 20* What battle of bragues on Sandgate where met the bobby mobbed his bibby mabbing through the ryce.

*p. 329, l. 25* And some say they seen old dummydeaf with a leaf of bronze on his cloak so grey trooping his colour a pace to the eire.

*p. 334, l. 31* Yes, we've conned thon print in its gloss so gay how it came from Finndlader's Yule to the day and it's Hey Tallaght Hoe on the king's highway with his hounds on the home at a turning. To Donnicoombe Fairing.

*p. 343, l. 21* Of all the quirasses and all the qwehrmin in the tragedoes of those antiants their grandoper . . .

*p. 337, l. 5* The groom is in the greenhouse, gattling out his. Gun.

*p. 339, l. 4* He gatovit and me gotafit and Oalgoaks Chelovar gat a fudden. [*I got a robe . . .*]

*l. 7* While the bucks bite his dos his hart bides the ros till the bounds of his bays bell the warning.

*p. 344, l. 27* . . . I was babbeing and yetaghain bubbering, bibbelboy, me marrues me shkewers me gnaass me fiet, tob tob ton beat it, solongopatom.

*p. 363, l. 10* Heat wives rasing. They jest keeps rosing. He jumps leaps rizing. How long! [*Old Man River.*]

*l. 13* Does they ought to buy the papel boys when he footles up their suit? He's their mark to foil the flouter and they certainly owe.

*p. 378, l. 35* . . . when it's a ped to foul a delfian in the Mahnung.

*p. 389, l. 4* And mild aunt Liza is as loose as her neese.

*p. 394, l. 33* Itself is itself Alone (hear, O hear, Caller Errin !)

*p. 397, l. 11* . . . like the senior follies at murther magrees, squatting round two by two, the four confederates, with Caxons the Coxwarn, up the wet air register in Old Man's House . . .

*p. 406* Ever of thee, Anne Lynch. He's deeply draiming! House-ama. Tea is the Highest! For auld lang Ayternitay. [*Ever of thee, The Holy City, Auld Lang Syne, For all Eternity.*]

*p. 409, l. 1* I heard the man Shee shinging in the pantry bay. Down among the dustbins let him lie! . . .

p. 415, l. 21 . . . for O'Cronione lags acrumbling in his sands but his sunsunsuns still tumlle on.

p. 426, l. 4 Rock me Julie but I will solio !

p. 427, l. 1 . . . by Killesther's lapes and falls . . .

l. 5 *open the Door Softly* . . .

l. 10 and the stellas were shinin'gs . . . O dulcid dreamings languidous ! [*Tosca*: E lucevan le stelle . . .]

p. 443, l. 17 In which case I'll not be complete in fighting lust until Icontrive to half kill your Charley you're my darling for you and send him to Home Surgeon Hume . . .

p. 446, l. 34 Come into the garden guild and be free of the gape at-home.

p. 445, l. 30 Our homerole poet to Ostelinda, Fred Wotherly, puts it somewhys better. Your sitting on me style, maybe, whereoft I helped your ore. [Fred Weatherly was a prolific writer of words for songs.]

p. 449, l. 18 . . . where I'll dreamt that I'll dwealth mid warblers' walls when throstles and choughs to my sigh hiehied . . .

After allusions to the Dorian mode, tonic sol-fa, and other scales, come references to tenors.

p. 450 Nomario ! And bemolly and jiesis ! For I sprt a what-youmacormack in the latcher part of my throughers.

There follows a rhapsody of musical terms.

p. 456 Not a spot of my hide but you'd love to seek ad scanagain ! [*Molly Brannigan*.]

p. 473, l. 22 The west shall shake the east awake.

p. 479, l. 1 . . . I used to be always overthere on the fourth day at my grandmother's place, Tear-nan-Ogre, my little grey home in the west . . .

p. 491, l. 22 From the sallies to the allies through their central power ?

p. 495, l. 3 . . . skirreless ballets in Parsee French . . . [Percy French, who wrote *Phil the Fluter's Ball*, *The Mountains of Mourne*, *Are ye right there, Michael, are ye right?* and other ballads.]

p. 499, l. 13 But there's leps of flam in Funnycoon's Wick.

p. 513, l. 12 You should pree him prance the polcat, you whould sniff him wops around, you should hear his piedegrotts schraying as his skimpiess kirp a . . .

p. 516, ll. 7, 30 Wearing of the Blue. [Two songs here: the second *The Croppy Boy's Lament*: "I wore the red and I wore the blue . . ."]

Nap O'Farrell Patter Tandy: [Second song here *The Rising of the Moon*.]

p. 519, l. 17 . . . D'yu mean to tall grand jurors of thathens of tharctic on your oath, me lad, and ask us to believe you for, all you're enduring long terms . . .

p. 528, l. 30 The leinstrel boy to the wall is gone and there's moreen astoreen for Monn and Conn.

p. 535, l. 22 Is that you, Whitehead? Have you headnoise now? . . . Old Whitehowth he is speaking again. Ope Eustace tube! [Percy Whitehead, a famous Dublin baritone, now teaches singing.]

p. 538, l. 27 The man what shocked his shanks at contey Carlow's.

p. 541, l. 28 With three hunkered peepers and twa and twas!

p. 553, l. 31 . . . whereon, in mantram of truemen like yahoomen . . . [*The Memory of the Dead*.]

p. 562 Whene'er I see those smiles in eyes 'tis Father Quinn again.

p. 587, l. 13 . . . tomorow comrades, we, his long life's strength and cuirscreen loan to our allhallowed king, the pitchur that he's turned to weld the wall (Lawd lengthen him!) his standpoint was . . .

p. 599, l. 21 There's a tavarin in the tarn.

p. 617, l. 15 Music, me ouldstrow, please!

p. 617, l. 31 Thesweetest song in the world?

This selection from what are often whole paragraphs of allusions and echoes shows sufficiently how saturated was Joyce's mind with vocal music in all its aspects, from music-hall songs to opera and lieder, and how he used it to evoke the memories and illustrate the meanings that were bound up with it; meanings that must remain uncertain unless one seeks for the basis of the illustration. The frustrated tenor certainly got his own back on Mario-O'Mara-De'Reszke-Reeves-McGuckin-McCormack-Sullivan and Co.

## CHAPTER IV

U LYSSES studies the mind of man by day, taking as its material the waking thoughts and half conscious reveries of a small group of Dubliners. In *Finnegans Wake* Joyce studies the mind of man by night, using the dreams of a single character, a Dubliner of Scandinavian extraction, but going far beyond the resources of that character's mind in order to record its workings. There is abundant evidence for this, external and internal, including that of Joyce himself: so, in spite of Mr. J. C. Powys, who in a stimulating essay<sup>1</sup> breezily shoves this evidence aside, declaring that Joyce very likely supposed he was writing about a dream world, but that the book ran away with him; and in spite of the fact that Joyce worked with the full powers of his conscious waking mind over repeated drafts of his manuscript; we can accept the evidence, and try to see what it involves.

### 2

A knowledge of the unconscious mind is as old as literature. The Bible abounds in what a psychologist today would claim as instances of its working: dreams and their interpretation, prophecy, demonic possession, the voice of God speaking to individuals, the phenomena of conversion, the references to witchcraft and sorcery—all these things the psychologist regards as lying within his province. The Bible treats most of them objectively, at their face value. For example, it regards the voices as external to the people called—"Then Eli perceived that God had called the child . . ."—whereas the psychologist might

<sup>1</sup> *Modern Reading*, No. 7.

explain them differently:<sup>1</sup> but both Bible and psychologist record similar phenomena and agree in taking them seriously. The δαίμων of Socrates, which nobody questions, would nowadays be regarded as proceeding from a deeper level of his own mind. Socrates' contemporaries, the Greek tragic dramatists over two thousand years ago, and Shakespeare over three hundred, show a profound understanding of those motives that, buried deeply in the mind, issue in speech and action which appear compulsory and of which doer and speaker can give no adequate account. "It is the cause, my soul, it is the cause"; but they do not know how or why.

A myth embodies something true about mankind, and it is not for nothing that Freudian psychology has taken the names of Oedipus, Orestes, Electra, etc., as labels for certain characteristic disturbances in the human mind. Shakespearean myth is not yet greatly used in psychology, though it is as rich a source. We are obliged to consider it, very briefly, for reasons which will appear: but, before we do so, the reader is asked to bear with a very elementary account of the way in which the problem is being approached.

### 3

The nature of our experience and the constitution of our minds oblige us to form certain mental associations between the objects which we encounter, to make certain thought-patterns. To these patterns, which tend to become habitual and characteristic, psychological jargon has given the name of complexes. Contrary to popular belief, complexes are for the most part harmless. They mark the difference between one mental make-up and another: as when, for example, an old gentleman is always moved by the mention of marmalade to tell the same anecdote. The connection with marmalade may not be apparent, and the

<sup>1</sup> It is perhaps a weakness of contemporary psychology that it does not as a rule distinguish between psychological and psychic phenomena, between the clairvoyance or clairaudience that is a projection of something from within, and that which has a cause outside the percipient—if, indeed, it ever allows that the latter is possible. The distinction is examined by Dr. and Mrs. L. J. Bendit in their book *The Psychic Sense*.

old gentleman has possibly long since forgotten it; but, although the connecting links are buried, the association persists. It has become one of the old gentleman's habitual thought-patterns.

The tendency to forget links is much stronger when any of the material is painful or repugnant. Then, the whole association or complex is apt to be submerged. In extreme cases, it splits off, and takes on an independent personality of its own, becoming a potential mutineer, and emerging into the sufferer's consciousness disguised as an obsession, an unreasoning fear, a fantasy, a rejection or intolerance of normal adult experience, a disturbance of physical function, or the symptom of some bodily disorder. Such independent complexes are called neuroses.<sup>1</sup> There are strong grounds for thinking that every neurosis is an attempt at cure, an effort within the ship's hold to subdue the mutineer by making a noise so as to attract the attention of those on deck.<sup>2</sup> However indirectly and obscurely, it draws attention to the buried disorder, and the psychiatrist, skilled in reading such signals from below the hatches, is often able to locate the mutineer and disarm him. But people do not as a rule consult a psychiatrist until the disorder is interfering actively with the conduct of their lives. Many neurotics continue to bury their symptom, to appease and placate the mutineer, a weakness which generally leads more and more members of the crew to join him. If this inner mutiny spreads, if the number of split-off complexes becomes too great for the sufferer to control, he is spoken of as a psychotic. His personality is no longer in command, his grasp on outer reality is weakened. The mutineers, in other words the contents of his unconscious mind, rush through and overpower him, and he usually ends up in an asylum. The point to realise is that psychosis—though it is different from neurosis in the all-important fact that the patient has lost control, and though it is often, but not always, accompanied by organic deterioration—is, except in cases where it can be shown to arise from organic

<sup>1</sup> This definition, proposed by Jung, was accepted by a world congress of psychologists in London, in 1936: "A neurosis is a dissociation of personality due to the existence of complexes."

<sup>2</sup> "Every neurotic is partly in the right." Adler.

causes, the end of a process of which neurosis is the beginning. The old text-books of medical psychology, which drew a hard-and-fast organic line between the two, were based upon a materialistic view which does not cover many facts and factors realised since.

Our inquiry, however, confines us to neuroses, that is to say, to those characteristic associations which, having hardened into thought-patterns and become habitual, have for one reason or another been buried beneath the surface of the conscious mind, and, taking on an independent life of their own, issue to the surface in the guise of fears, obsessions, fantasies, and various forms of reluctance or inability to meet the stresses of everyday life. Influenced by these, the neurotic is continually protesting against circumstance, and trying to escape from inconvenient or painful facts. Hence it happens that many neurotics find themselves at odds with the framework of human life, that is, with space and time; particularly with time. Space can be a terrible enemy, dividing them from the place where they want to be and from those whom they love. They resent it to excess, and have their own ways of trying to overcome it. But the greatest enemy is time. For the neurotic, time always moves too fast or too slowly. He is always hurrying towards some point in the future or trying to remain at some point in the past. He cannot wait. "I must have it *now*," he cries. Instead of allowing the normal growth of love, which depends on time, he passionately affirms his total identification with the beloved. He rushes at people, trying to achieve an immediate intimacy. He cannot bear the least delay or set-back.

Conversely, he refuses to grow up. Seeing trouble ahead, he tries to remain where he is. All his actions are mistimed. And, since his aberration is due to inner mutineers, since the devices by which he attempts to evade time's demands come from his unconscious mind, the persuasions of reason are seldom effective with him. Only a firm but sympathetic search for the mutineers, or the shock of suddenly seeing what has been going on below decks, can bring him back to normal. He *can* be brought back to normal, because he is suffering from a mild split only, and the symptoms in which the split emerges, whether physical or mental,



lie within the reach of his consciousness. With the psychotic, they lie beyond the reach of his consciousness.

The mental symptoms in which emerges this basic unwillingness to accept the limitations of time and space, of growth and circumstance, are easier to express graphically than to define. Identification, "I am what I love", or "I have what I want", is comforting to the neurotic because it tells him that all is well, and removes the necessity for effort. Fundamentally a childish device, it is the classic example of bad timing, since it combines impatience ("I cannot wait: time is going too slowly") with refusal to develop beyond childish ways ("I will not grow up: time is going too fast").

Obsession has been defined as the exaltation of a part of life over the whole. It is the independent personality assumed by whatever the neurotic seeks in order to compensate himself for his basic impatience of time and space. For our present purpose, fears and phobias may be considered under the heading of obsession. Typical processes are:

"I want him, her, it. Therefore, I must have him, her, it. When I have him, her, it, I shall have everything. Therefore he, she, it, is everything."

"I hate him, her, it. Therefore he, she, it, must disappear. When he, she, it, disappears, I shall be free from all that I hate."

"I fear him, her, it. Therefore, I must destroy him, her, it. When I destroy him, her, it, I shall be perfectly safe."

This form is often reversed:

"I am safe. Nothing can touch me. If anything did, I simply couldn't *bear* it. Therefore, nothing can touch me. Therefore, I am safe."

Such defensive thought-patterns, hardened to the degree of having an independent life within the personality, become neurotic obsessions. They are capable of many variations, and most commonly lead the sufferer to a violent hostility towards the person or thing which he associates with the imagined threat.

Another most common type of defensive thought-pattern is Fantasy. This is constructed to hide, or to escape from, an inconvenient reality, or something of which the sufferer is afraid. It is the device most usually adopted by intuitive natures—i.e. those gifted with the power to see round corners. The basis of fantasy is the assumption of that which we wish to be true, a magical short cut to the desired goal. The neurotic indulges in daydreams in which he pictures himself in the position of power or privilege which he covets (Identification is a form of fantasy): or he regresses mentally into a state previous to the present alarming state which seems to call for effort: or he attempts to fix and make permanent a state in which effort will not be necessary. A common instance of this is the boy or girl who, knowing intuitively that sex will be a severe and painful trial once it is roused, remains in an unawakened state so as not to be compelled to do anything about it, or develops a fantasy which will make doing anything about it difficult or impossible. This shrinking from experience does not develop into a neurosis until it has got out of control, and the motives which led to its adoption have been buried, enabling it to take on an independent life of its own. Once it has become independent, fantasy is the most versatile of the neuroses. It need not be a method of compensation: it can turn inward, as a perpetual self-accusation, emerging in a feeling of guilt, in self-punishment, and what we have become accustomed to call an inferiority complex. The person affected by it is dangerously insecure. He can become a self-defeatist, punishing himself by failing in every undertaking and in every contact, making true the worst accusations of the person with whom his sense of guilt is associated: or he can project his self-distrust outwards, in the form of violent suspicion of other people.

For example, a child whose mother was cruel to her decided, very early in life, that she must be terribly wicked, since, otherwise, the person who should be kindest of all to her could not possibly have treated her so unkindly. As she grew older, she came to hate her mother, and took this hatred as a proof of her

own wickedness. The fantasy (that she was wicked) led her to punish herself by making the derogatory things her mother had said come true.

Another girl had parents who fought, and took her father's part. Soon after her mother's death, she discovered that she had been backing the wrong side. Seized by a feeling of guilt, she concluded that, if she had been kinder, her mother would not have died. This was too bad a thought to face; the girl buried it, it bred many a mutineer, and emerged later in the form of an illness suggested by things her mother had said.

A third, even more familiar type procures defeat by such intense suspicion of other people as to rebuff all friendly advances, and will make contact with nobody, for fear of being deceived; lest they exhibit the qualities which his sense of guilt makes him believe are in himself.

It will be obvious that there is a great deal of overlapping, and that the line between fantasy and obsession may often be hard to draw. In the same way, a phobia can be looked on either as a mild obsession, or as a destructive type of fantasy. Exact definitions are important only to the student and to the psychologist. All that is necessary for general purposes is to recognise that such states of mind exist, and that they arise usually from some such inner mutiny as has been described: the suppression into the unconscious levels of the mind of matter which, for one reason or another, the conscious mind prefers not to contemplate, and which assumes an independent life of its own.

A knowledge of these mental conditions is not new. They have been studied closely in the last fifty years, classified, systematised, and made use of experimentally, but they were known before. Greek tragedy shows a clear awareness of what may happen when the mind's autonomy breaks down: it has supplied the Central European psychologists with their symbols, the type-fables for their classification of cases. We need no great insight, still less an adherence to any school of psychology, to see in the Furies that pursued Orestes the personification of an insatiable sense of guilt. But Joyce, despite the framework he chose to contain and support *Ulysses*, does not approach the realm of the unconscious mind through the terminology established by

Freud and his disciples. As befits a writer, he leans more upon literature than upon science. For that reason, we will do well to look nearer to our own time, and to start with the writer whom Joyce so profitably studied, Shakespeare.

5

The plays of Shakespeare exhibit so full a knowledge of the principal neuroses that it is a wonder our British psychologists have not gone to them for labels with which to replace those of Freud. There is no space here to do more than glance at a few of the most obvious examples, but the subject deserves research.

First among the neuroses revealed by Shakespeare is the basic intolerance of time. "Bad timing" is at the root of many of the tragedies. Shakespeare held that everything must grow at its own natural pace, whether it be love, advancement, wisdom, or even decay. Any attempt to speed up or avert the process leads to disaster. *Romeo and Juliet* is the classic example of youth's refusal to submit to the necessary measure of living. Romeo is seen first as the victim of a daydream. His sentimental obsession with Rosaline is shattered by the shock of real love, and he is at once plunged into a fierce impatience. All Friar Laurence's counsel is knocked aside. The old man foretells the outcome—

These violent delights have violent ends

—but Romeo will not listen. When, presently, he is thwarted, when separation in space is added to separation in time, he has a fit of hysterics. There follows a riot of mistiming, the undelivered letter, the over-hasty suicide, the wreck of everything, as if (Shakespeare often seems to believe this) one act of rebellion against time puts us at odds with it, and must be paid for by a series of mistimings; "too soon" counterbalanced by "too late", "too late" by "too soon". Yet, from the start, Romeo's unconscious mind has realised the truth. After a dream, he exclaims

. . . My mind misgives  
Some consequence yet hanging in the stars  
Shall bitterly begin his fearful date  
With this night's revels.

Richard II shares Romeo's intolerance of time's delay, and is repaid by coming back from Ireland a day too late. Richard III cannot wait, and plucks at his own doom. The ghosts conjured up by his unconscious mind pursue him at his end. In the same play, Clarence is warned of his death by a dream. Macbeth cannot wait to receive the guerdon promised by the weird sisters. He must needs hurry it on, and play most foully for't. Lear, in too much of a hurry to set aside the cares and responsibilities of kingship, is in too much of a hurry to think ill of Cordelia. At the end, the rescuers come too late. Claudius, as is strongly hinted in the play performed before the court in *Hamlet*, procured his own death because he could not wait. The lines spoken by the Player King to his Queen,

Faith, I must leave thee, love, and shortly too :

My operant powers their functions leave to do,

suggest that Hamlet's father was failing, and that, if he had waited, Claudius might have obtained from time's hand what he seized by murder.<sup>1</sup>

With the great tragic figures, their impatience of time can hardly be separated from the obsession which grows with and feeds it: the exaltation of a part of their mind over the whole, the headlong growth of their chief characteristic, until it attains such life of its own as to overthrow the balance of their character. Anthony's obsession for Cleopatra takes charge and pushes aside all his other qualities, even his good faith as a commander. Macbeth's ambition, once fed with supernatural food, destroys him. The pride of Coriolanus, the split-off intelligence of John, the self-dislike which Timon projects on the rest of mankind,

<sup>1</sup> Notice also the additional suggestion that the elder Hamlet was fussy and a bore:

. . . so loving to my mother

That he might not beteem the winds of heaven

Visit her face too roughly. . . .

very type of the husband who solicitously pursues his wife with a macintosh or a cushion when she goes out into the garden, and is always warning her not to take cold. His self-righteousness as a ghost, too, cannot all have been acquired on the far side of the grave. Small wonder an attractive cad could supplant him.

are all instances of a single quality predominating, and pushing the others out, like a cuckoo in the nest.

One of the most interesting neurotics in the plays is Leontes, in *The Winter's Tale*.<sup>1</sup> Leontes suffers from the form of inferiority complex commonest in Shakespeare, that of readily believing the woman he loves to be unfaithful to him. Claudio, Posthumus, Othello all believe the worst on very slender evidence. Leontes believes that Hermione is unfaithful to him with Polixenes. When the courtiers protest that this is nonsense, he will not listen.

You smell this business with a sense as cold

As is a dead man's nose : but I do see't and feel it.

He has Hermione tried and publicly disgraced, and goes so far as to expose her baby daughter on the bare hillside. At last he agrees to consult the oracle at Delphi. His obsession is so strong, no thought enters his head but that the god will approve. When the messengers return, proclaiming the injustice he has done, Leontes vehemently rejects the verdict.

There is no truth at all i' the oracle :

The sessions shall proceed : this is mere falsehood.

This is typical. "I do see't and feel it," therefore it is. The picture presented by his obsession is so powerful that it is unchecked by reality. It takes the news of his son's death to bring him to his senses. For, violent and unreasonable though his behaviour has been, the obsession is still within the reach of his consciousness. It is a neurosis, not a psychosis. In a terrible flash he sees where he has gone, and repents.

His full recovery is long delayed. Only time can heal him. Not until the oracle has been fulfilled, and that which was lost is found—not until he welcomes back Perdita can Hermione cease to be a statue and become once more a warm, responsive woman to him.

The jealous obsession of Othello is made fatal by a far more complex situation. This play has such deep roots, and works so painfully upon the mind, that many critics have been unable to judge it dispassionately. Yeats, for example, complained to me

<sup>1</sup> See p. 89.

once that he resented it as arbitrarily painful. The part played by Iago seemed to him fortuitous, in the sense that the tragedy did not arise inevitably from Othello's character, as did that of the other great tragic figures. It does not; it arises from the whole situation. Iago's is no arbitrary intrusion. The marriage was doomed anyway. He merely speeds up the catastrophe. Othello believes that Desdemona is unfaithful because he has all along inwardly doubted that he, a coloured man, can hold the love of this beautiful white girl. He has stepped out of his place. Fear dogs him, and he remembers the warning of Brabantio:

Look to her, Moor; have a quick eye to see:  
She has deceived her father, and may thee.

—only to be bound by it as by his answer, "My life upon her faith!"<sup>1</sup>: and Desdemona accepts her undeserved fate with so little struggle because she too has an inner sense of guilt. She has betrayed the standards of her father, his friends, and hers, in choosing the sooty bosom of the Moor. Thus Othello's accusation, striking on this, throws her into a kind of trance. Her behaviour just before the accusation shows an unconscious readiness for what is to come.

No: the marriage was doomed because neither at all understood the other. Iago is no arbitrary invention to bring about disaster. He has a motive, and a strong one. "Honest Iago"—the phrase, and the coarseness of his speech, suggest the ranker.<sup>2</sup> The most convincing performance of the part I have seen<sup>3</sup> made him outwardly the genial Sergeant-Major type, as distinct

<sup>1</sup> This unconscious prescience is frequent in Shakespeare. Cf. Macbeth to Banquo, "Fail not our feast," and Banquo's reply, "My lord, I will not." Also Edmund, to Goneril, "Yours in the ranks of death," Cæsar to Trebonius, "Be near me that I may remember you." And, even more remarkable, the slip of the tongue whereby the Mayor, pointing out a castle to Richard III, calls it Richmond: for Richard had heard a prophecy that he should not live long after he had seen Richmond.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. "Honest soldier," to the sentry Francisco (*Hamlet*): "Honest good fellows, put up, put up," to the musicians (*Romeo and Juliet*), etc.

<sup>3</sup> By the late F. Randle Ayrton. Iago has his share of malice, but it has motive behind it. There is more of the real thing in Richard III, and a flicker in Aaron (*Titus Andronicus*).

from the officer Cassio, with a sufficient reason, therefore, for jealousy; and, when he set his foot upon Othello foaming on the ground, added a shudder of the physical repulsion some feel for men of a different colour. This treatment of the character makes it unnecessary to account for Iago as an example of pure malice, that is to say, disinterested, cold, intellectual evil, deriving no personal profit from its operations; an explanation favoured by some commentators. It keeps him integrally within the human framework of the play, and covers the facts, including the reiteration of "honest Iago", so puzzling if he is looked on as a monster. It makes credible Desdemona's appeal to him,

O good Iago,  
What shall I do to win my lord again?

which otherwise seems a gratuitous stroke of irony and pathos.

There is thus nothing arbitrary or invented about the part played by Iago. He precipitates the tragedy, but the warring elements are there already. Sooner or later, the misunderstanding between Othello and Desdemona would have been manifest, and their sense of guilt, buried beneath the landslide of passion, would have been laid bare. Iago's function is to make it happen sooner.

6

Of fantasy, in its less tragic forms, there is no better example than *Twelfth Night*. Orsino is sighing, not for love, but about it. Type of the perpetual adolescent, the man who will not grow up, he knows intuitively that, if ever he falls in love, he will have to do something about it. A shadow love is easier to deal with, and has the extra advantage of making him an object of pity. He therefore indulges in a protective fantasy, choosing a lady who is inaccessible, and so will leave him undisturbed. Olivia, the lady in question, is also avoiding love, but for a different reason. She knows well that, when it comes, it will shake her spirit to its depths. Her protective fantasy is a vow of mourning for her brother. She will "cloistered walk", etc., for seven years, and keep herself from the thunderbolt. The third victim of fantasy, Malvolio, is compensating himself by a



dream of power and conquest for the position which, he knows well, is too low for his gifts and his serious intelligence, and for the snubs from Sir Toby, to which that position exposes him. Did contemplation not make a rare turkey-cock of him, he could readily manage them all: but it is the quality of this kind of fantasy that others may perceive it, and the sober well-read man is brought to such a pass, he jets so under his advanced plumes, that Maria, quick witted and practical, unerringly reads his mind. It is his bitterest humiliation that his fantasy has betrayed him to the "idle, shallow creatures" whom he so despised.

The fantasies of Orsino and Olivia are dispelled less rudely. Olivia has fallen headlong in love with the disguised Viola, and is speedily brought to such a pitch that even her pride is gone. "I do I know not what," she complains. "Ourselves we do not owe." How rightly had she feared what love would do to her! The advent of the straightforward, uncomplicated Sebastian introduces a strand of reality parallel to that which trips Malvolio. Finding himself wooed by a beautiful and wealthy woman, Sebastian scratches his head, embraces his good luck, and marries her. We do not see how Olivia accepts the transference: his character does not resemble Viola's: but probably his physical resemblance to "Cesario" will do the trick, especially when Viola is once more dressed as a girl.

For Orsino, all falls out pat. He is offered love on a plate, without having to do anything about it. Still, Viola is not one to cosset fantasy. She will probably make a man of the sentimentalist, as surely as the wittiest piece of Eve's flesh in Illyria will make Sir Toby leave drinking.

A more dangerous fantasy benumbs Antonio, in *The Merchant of Venice*. His picture of himself has become independent of him, and produced a state of mind which is beyond his control. It rises from his unconscious mind, and he can find no rational cause for it.

In sooth, I know not why I am so sad.  
It wearies me: you say it wearies you:  
But how I caught it, found it, or came by it,  
What stuff 'tis made of, whereof it is born,  
I am to learn.

His cheerful extraverted friends try to relate it to material causes, but it is a true depression, rising from within. Its dominion makes him meek in the hour of danger: he hardly struggles at all.

I am a tainted wether of the flock,  
Meetest for death.

It is doubtful if even the narrow escape from death can cure him. He will probably nurse his melancholy, and be an indulgent skeleton at the Belmont rejoicings. There is a temptation to examine his state of mind from the angle of his behaviour to Shylock, but I am afraid it must be resisted.

7

Far more compelling than any of these considerations is the light thrown by an American psychiatrist on certain tendencies in the mind of Hamlet. Dr. Frederic Wertham, of New York, was called upon to examine a seventeen-year-old Italian boy named Gino, who had killed his mother in her bedroom, inflicting upon her more than thirty stab wounds. The boy had resisted the impulse to kill her for five years, since the death of his father: his motive was to punish her for going with other men. In his investigation of the case, Dr. Wertham was struck by resemblance both to the story of Orestes, and to Hamlet's treatment of his mother. Dr. Wertham's book has now been published in this country,<sup>1</sup> and I may perhaps summarise the details of this remarkable piece of medical and literary research. Suffice it to say that Gino's case shows no fewer than nine close parallels with the case of Orestes (by parallels I mean coincidences of circumstance, of thought, and of utterance) and ten with that of Hamlet. True, Hamlet did not stab his mother, but the impulse was there, thrusting up from his unconscious mind:

... let not the soul of Nero  
Inhabit this firm bosom ...

<sup>1</sup> *Dark Legend*: Gollancz.

and he was fully aware of it. The similarities between the history of this Italian boy, who had heard neither of Hamlet nor Orestes, with both their histories, are astonishing. To take three only: Orestes' account of the killing of his mother, and Gino's account of his, correspond exactly in five particulars. Just as the ghost urges Hamlet to consider what Gertrude has done, so Gino's father in a dream urges the boy to see what his mother is doing. Just as Hamlet confronts his mother with what she has done,

Come, come, and sit you down; you shall not budge;  
You go not till I set you up a glass  
Wherein you may see the inmost part of you . . .

and goes on to a detailed picture of the love-making which so revolts him, so Gino imagines repeatedly a scene in which he compels her to listen while, in full detail, he tells her what she has done and what a wicked woman she is. These are two only of ten close resemblances to this part of the Hamlet story, resemblances which are remarkable enough one by one, but which, looked at in sum, stamp the two cases with an extraordinary similarity of pattern. The similarity to Orestes' case is hardly less remarkable.

Dr. Wertham's investigation shows that the psychology of matricide, and of the impulses which, once out of control, may lead to matricide, were understood by a writer who lived some two thousand five hundred years ago, and by another writer who lived some three hundred and thirty years ago: and that a modern case so strongly resembles these two older cases as to suggest that the impulses rising from such a profound disturbance in the mind tend to conform to a basic pattern. This agrees with the findings of contemporary practice. If the unconscious mind did not tend to be relatively undifferentiated, if, that is to say, the buried part of people's minds did not show a higher degree of similarity than their conscious minds, the art of psychiatry would be even more difficult than it is. For one thing, the interpretation of dreams would be reduced to a series of laborious delvings into the unique experience of each patient, and there

would be very little chance to correlate these individual results and base a theory upon them.<sup>1</sup>

That is why I think Miss Rebecca West is wrong when she makes it a fault of Joyce that he uses the interior monologue for more than one character in *Ulysses*, and makes the different monologues very much alike.

But worse still, the two other characters in the book are made to use gibberish, though that is so much outside their characters that it renders the book pointless.<sup>2</sup>

The monologues are alike because, the deeper we go into the unconscious mind, the more do superficial differences tend to disappear, and the closer we come to the fundamentals wherein we are all alike. The Colonel's lady and Judy O'Grady are sisters under their mental as well as their physical skin. Jung's conception of the collective unconscious is based on that vast undifferentiated experience which we share as human beings.

It is true that in his view it is primitive, mythopæic, and related to the sympathetic nervous system rather than to the brain, and so in itself it cannot justify Joyce in the erudition with which he records Earwicker's dreams in *Finnegans Wake*; but it is undeniably a starting point, its archetypes are the fear-created shadows of the first of the four sections, the first phase of Vico's cycle; in Mr. Harry Levin's admirable phrase: "H. C. Earwicker's subconscious mind is the historical consciousness of the human race."

8-

It would be easy to overstress Dr. Wertham's discoveries, and the other Shakespearian characterisations at which we have

<sup>1</sup> Feeling that there was a tendency among psychiatrists to manipulate their patients' dreams to suit their own purposes, I tried over a period of some fourteen months the experiment of submitting the same dreams, my own and other people's, to two psychiatrists of entirely different background, mentality, and training, and occasionally to a third. The interpretations, while they differed in the emphasis of this or that feature of the dream, were always substantially the same: convincing me that there is, if not a science, at least an art of dream interpretation, based on certain resemblances between the unconscious mind of one person and another.

<sup>2</sup> *The Strange Necessity* (Jonathan Cape, 1928).

been glancing. They do not mean that Shakespeare studied neurosis as such, or that he was aware of any such concept as the unconscious mind. They do mean that he knew how people behave, and how motives, which are often hidden from them, impel them to such behaviour. He had a deep intuitive knowledge of such phenomena as the sense of guilt that issues in sleep-walking, of the symbolic attempt to be rid of guilt by washing the hands, and a hundred other actions arising from stress below the surface. His successors in the drama knew something about these matters, too.

My soul, like to a ship in a dark storm,  
Is driven I know not whither.

To take but one example, Ford's *Perkin Warbeck* is a deliberate and most interesting psychological study, the impostor coming finally to believe his own story.

Shakespeare looked below the surface. He was at pains to approve Duncan's verdict,

There's no art  
To read the mind's construction in the face.

He made no attempt to systematise any part of the mind's construction. His business was to reveal it in action. I will not therefore say that the psychology of our day confirms Shakespeare, but rather that our psychologists, if they examine Shakespeare, will see their theory confirmed by his practice.

9

Joyce was a deep student of Shakespeare, and Shakespeare's influence upon him was tremendous. It appears in many places. The interior monologue—allowing for Dujardin's share in inspiring Joyce<sup>1</sup>—is a development of the Shakespearean soliloquy: not only of the obvious soliloquy, spoken aside, but of those heightened passages wherein the speaker, though apparently

<sup>1</sup> It has been suggested that Joyce's declaration of indebtedness to *Les Lauriers Sont Coupés* was not serious. Mr. Stuart Gilbert most emphatically denies this, and says that Joyce was enthusiastic about its technique.

replying to another, is really communing with the depths of his own mind. For instance, Viola's

Make me a willow cabin at your gate  
And call upon my soul within the house . . .

is not an answer to Olivia. It is spoken to the air, over Olivia's head, as it were. Such passages of unpremeditated self-revelation, as distinct from those deliberately addressed to the audience, are like arias in an opera, and must be spoken in a different manner from the ordinary give and take of dialogue. Joyce uses monologue in both ways: but he is especially fond of this poetic use of it, and such monologues are in a different key from their context, quickening often into poetry.

The monologues of Stephen Dedalus are full of references, direct and indirect, to Shakespeare, and Shakespeare is often discussed in the dialogue. In the first episode of *Ulysses*, Haines asks Stephen his idea of Hamlet. We are not given it, for Mulligan intervenes; but we are not kept waiting very long. References to Shakespeare are frequent, and, in the eighth episode, we get a sustained chapter of Shakespearean criticism, most of it focussed on the character of Hamlet, whose relationship to his father is of great importance to the relationship between Stephen and Simon, and Stephen and Bloom. The writing of this passage contains echoes which show a detailed knowledge of Shakespeare and of other Elizabethan dramatists. *Ulysses* contains explicit references to *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *King Lear*, *Othello*, *Troilus and Cressida*, *Venus and Adonis*, *Pericles*, *The Tempest*, *King John*, *Anthony and Cleopatra*, *Cymbeline*, *As You Like It*, *Twelfth Night*, *The Winter's Tale*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *Richard III*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *Coriolanus*, *Measure for Measure*, and, over and over again, *Hamlet*. The references throughout are too numerous to collect. I do not find explicit references to other Elizabethan playwrights, except Greene and Chettle: the mention of Perkin Warbeck cannot be claimed for Ford's play: but the *Scylla and Charybdis* chapter is packed with allusions to and from Elizabethan literature, direct and indirect.

To check the allusions in *Finnegans Wake* would be a terrifying

task, since one would have to be ready to detect them in many disguises. In three periods of twenty minutes, opening the book at random, I found six, four, and seven allusions. Some are obvious—"Our once and only Bragspear:" "My hood! cries Antony Romeo:"<sup>1</sup> some emerge as connecting links of thought in a long passage. For example, starting on p. 40, in the passage about "Treacle Tom", we get "Eglandine's choicest herbage . . . All Swell that Aimsweil . . . Shakedown . . . Bleakrooky . . . through Sant Iago by his cocklehat . . . Byron . . . cross Ebblin's chilled hamlet" (allusion also to Childe Harold, catching up Byron), "Rutland Heath . . . the bearers baited" (a theory that Rutland wrote the plays of Shakespeare is discussed in the *Scylla and Charybdis* chapter from *Ulysses*), and so on. Just as, in *Ulysses*, a knowledge of the plays is part of the fabric of Stephen's mind, so in *Finnegans Wake* the mind that records the dreaming mind of H. C. Earwicker, or should we say one of the minds into which that dreaming mind is allowed to spill, is likewise nourished on Shakespearean and Elizabethan allusion. Instances could be multiplied indefinitely, for, in Earwicker's mind as in Stephen's, once an association has been formed, it persists as a basic pattern or tune upon which many variations are made. When we add that, in the discussion of Hamlet in *Ulysses*, Stephen makes Hamlet's resentment against his mother an expression of Shakespeare's resentment against Ann Hathaway, and develops a further supposed break-through from the poet's own experience,

A player comes on . . . It is the ghost, the king, a king and no king, and the player is Shakespeare.

*Hamlet, I am thy father's spirit.*

To a son he speaks, the son of his soul, the prince, young Hamlet, and to the son of his body, Hamnet Shakespeare, who has died in Stratford that his namesake may live for ever;

that Stephen suffers from neurotic fears, and tries in the same breath to rationalise and deny them—"I imagine there is a malevolent reality behind these things I say I fear:" that he has a guilt

<sup>1</sup> "Heighho! says Antony Rowley": Richard Rowley and Antony Munday were, of course, Shakespeare's contemporaries.

complex about his mother, and cries in anguish to her phantom, "They say I killed you, mother:" that Bloom is afflicted by obsessions and indulges in fantasies, and that, in the brothel scene, when he is reminded of Blazes Boylan, his wife's latest lover, Shakespeare appears to him in the mirror, and makes a garbled reference to Othello strangling Desdemona: that the relationship of Hamlet to Ophelia comes into the *Proteus* episode, the grave-diggers' scene into the *Hades* episode, and that Paddy Dignam's spirit quotes the Ghost to Bloom in the *Circe* episode: that the names of Shakespeare, Stephen and Bloom are together the subject of the astrological passage in the *Ithaca* episode: that Stephen and his father are in their different ways at odds with time, and that Joyce himself, in *Finnegans Wake*, is trying to set narrative free from time's restraint: it will, I think, be conceded that, in any attempt to examine Joyce's approach to the unconscious mind, a glance at Shakespeare's treatment of problems that arise from the unconscious mind is not irrelevant.

# 10

I append a selection of Shakespearian references from *Finnegans Wake*.

p. 18, l. 21 The meandertale, aloss and again, of our old H eidenburgh in the days when H-ead-in-the-clouds walked the earth.

p. 19, l. 35 But the world, mind, is, was and will be writing its own wrunes for ever, man, on all matters that fall under the ban of our infrarational senses fore the last milch-camel, the heartvein throbbing between his eyebrows, has still to moor before the tomb of his cousin charmian where his date is tethered by the palm that's hers.

p. 36, l. 35 Gaping Gill, swift to mate errthors, stern to checkself, (diagnosing through eustacetube that it was to make with a markedly postpuberal hypertuituitary type of H eidelberg mannleisch cavern ethics) lufted his slopingforward, bad Sweatagore good murrough and dublnotch on to it as he was greedily obliged, and like a sensible ham, with infinite tact in the delicate situation seen the touchy nature of its perilous theme, thanked um for guilders received and time of day (not a little token abock allthe same that that was owl the God's clock it was) and, upon humble duty to greet his Tyskminister and thee and he shall gildthe gap Gaper his a mouldy voids, went about his business,



whoever it was, saluting corpses, as a matter of corse . . . [See also under Swift, p. 79.]

*p. 39, l. 32* . . . blotto after divers tots of hell fire, red biddy, bull dog, blue ruin and creeping jenny, Eglandine's choicest herbage, supplied by the Duck and Doggies, the Galoping Primrose, Brigid B rewster's, the Cock, the Postboy's H orn, the Little Old Man's and All Swell That Aims well, the Cup and the Stirrup, he sought his wellwarmed leababobed in a housingroom Abide With Oneanother at Bck W.W. . . .

*p. 40, l. 32* . . . he after having being trying all he knew with the lady's help of Madam Gristle for upward of eighteen calanders to get out of Sir Patrick Dun's, through Sir H umphrey Jervis's and into the Saint Kevin's bed in the Adelaide's hosspittles (from these incurable welleslays among those uncarable wellasdays through Sant Iago by his cocklegat, good Lazar, deliver us!) without after having been able to jerrywangle it anysides.

*p. 79, l. 32* Widow Strong, then, as her weaker had turned him to the wall (Tiptiptip!), did most all the scavenging from good King H amlaugh's gulden dayne though her lean besom cleaned but sparingly and her bare statement reads that . . .

*p. 84, l. 27* Nowthen leaving clashing ash, brawn and muscle and brassmade to oust earthenborn and rockcrystal to wreck isinglass but wurming along gradually for our savings backtowards motherwaters so many miles from bank and Dublin stone (olympiading even till the eleventh dynasty to reach that thuddysickend Hamlaugh) and to the question of boney's unlawfully obtaining a pierced paraflamme and claptrap fireguard there crops out the still more salient point of the politish leanings and town pursuits of our fore beer . . .

*p. 121, l. 30* . . . the lubricitous conjugation of the last with the first: the gipsy mating of a grand stylish gravedigging with secondbest buns (an interpolation: these munchables occur only in the Bootherbrowth family of MSS., Bb —Cod IV, Pap II, Brek XI, Lun III, Dinn XVII, Sup XXX, Fullup M DCX C: the scholiast has hungrily misheard a deadman's toller as a muffinbell).

*p. 143, l. 3* Now, to be on anew and basking again in the panaroma of all flores of speech, if a human being duly fatigued by his dayety, in the sooty, having plenxty off time on his gouty hands and vacants of space at his sleepish feet and as hapless behind the dreams of accuracy as any camelot prince of dinmurk, were at this auctual futule preterit-ing unstant, in the states of suspensive exanimation . . .

*p. 144, l. 13* Stoop alittle closer, fealse! Delightsome simply!  
Like Jolio and Romeune.

*p. 148, l. 12* The bold shame of me! I wouldn't, chickens, not for  
all the juliettes in the twinkly way!

*p. 152, l. 19* The onesomeness wast alltolonely, archunsitslike broady  
oval, and a Mookse he would a walking go (My hood! cries Antony  
Romeo) so one grandsumer evening . . .

*p. 152, l. 30* As he set off with his father's sword, his lancia spezzata,  
he was hirded on, and with that between his legs and his tarkeels, our  
once in only Bragspear, he clanked, to my clinking, from veetoes to  
threetop. every inch of an immortal.

*p. 161, l. 7* . . . the cash system (you must not be allowed to forget  
that this is all contained, I mean the system, in the dogmarks of origen  
on spurios) means that I cannot now have or nothave a piece of cheeps  
in your pocket at the same time and with the same manners as you can  
now nothalf or half the cheek apiece I've in mind unless Burrus and  
Caseous have not or not have seemaultaneously sysentangled them-  
selves, selldear to soldthere, once in the dairy days of buy and buy.

Burrus, let us like to imagine, is a genuine prime, the real choice,  
full of natural greace, the mildest of milkstoffs yet unbeaten as a risicide  
and, of course, obsoletely unadulterous whereat Caseous is obversely  
the revise of him and in fact not an ideal choose by any meals, though  
the betterman of the two is meltingly addicted to the more casual side  
of the arrivaliste case and, let me say it at once, as zealous over him as  
is passably he.

*p. 161, l. 20* Our old Party quite united round the Slatbowel at  
Commons: Pfarrer Salamoss himself and that sprog of a Pedersill  
and his Sprig of Thyme and a dozen of the Murphybuds and a score  
and more of the hot young Capels and Lettucia in her greensleeves  
and you too and me three, twinsome bibs but hansome ates, like  
shakespill and eggs!

*p. 161, l. 36* . . . if I don't make away with you I'm beyond Cæsar  
outnulused.

*p. 164, l. 22* The pawnbreaking pathos of the first of these shoddy  
pieces reveals it as a Caseous effort. Burrus's bit is often used for a  
toast.

*p. 165, l. 11* . . . it will be very convenient for me for the emolument  
to pursue Burrus and Caseous for a rung or two up their isocelating  
biangle.

p. 166, l. 29 Margareena she's vary fond of Burrus but, alick and alack! She velly fond of chee. (The importat innfluence exercised on everything by this eastasian import has not been till now fully flavoured though we can comfortably taste it in this case. I shall come back for a little more say farther on.) A cleopatrician in her oun right she at once complicates the position while Burrus and Caseous are cantending for her misstery by implicating hereself with an elusive Antonius, a wop who would appear to hug a personal interest in refined chess of all chades at the same time as he wags an antomine art of being rude like the boor. this Antonius-Burrus-Caseous grouptriad may be said to equate the qualis equivalent with the older socalled talis on talis one just as quantly as in the hyper-chemical economantarchy the tantum ergons irruminate<sup>1</sup> the the quantum urge . . .

p. 167, l. 22 Twelve tabular times till now have I edicted it Merus Genius to Careous Caseous!

p. 189, l. 7 . . . a philtred love, trysting by tantrums, small peace in ppenmark with sensibility, sponsibility, passibility and prostability . . .

p. 190, l. 31 . . . nomad, mooner by lamplight, antinos, shemming amid everyone's repressed laughter to conceal your scatchophily by mating, like a thoroughpaste prosodite, masculine monosyllables of the same numerical mus, an Irish emigrant the wrong way out, sitting on your crooked sixpenny stile, an unfrillfrocked quackfriar, you (will you for the laugh of Scheekspair just help mine with the epithet?) semisemitic serendipitist, you (thanks, I think that describes you) Europasianised Afferyank!

p. 192, l. 19 . . . to let you have your Sarday spree and holinight sleep (fame would come to you twixt a sleep and a wake) and leave to lie till Paraskivee and the cockcock crows for Danmark.

p. 193, l. 10 Do you hear what I'm seeing, hammet?

p. 227, l. 1 The many wiles of Winsure.

The grocer's bawd she slips her hand in the haricot bag, the lady in waiting sips her sup from the paraffin can, Mrs. Wildhare Quick-doctor helts her skelts up the casuaway.

p. 227, l. 32 . . . had a belting bout, chaste to chaste, with McAdoo about nothing . . .

p. 250, l. 16 For a burning would is come to dance inane. Clamours

<sup>1</sup> Salax taberna vosque contubernaes. . . .? CATULLUS.

hath moidered's lieb and herefore Coldours must leap no more. Lack breath must leap no more.

p. 250, l. 35 Led by Lignifer, in four hops of the happiest, ach beth cac duff, a marrer of the sward incoronate, the few fly farbetween!

p. 269, l. 19 To me or not to me. Satis thy quest on.

p. 271, l. 5 . . . the tryonfont of Oxthievius, Lapidous, and Malt-house Anthemy.

p. 274 (*in the column*) . . . as Shakfork might pitch it.

pp. 277-8 A long and complicated passage refers to the Osric scene in *Hamlet* ("imponence" . . . " . . . a pansy for pussy in the corner" . . . "a culious impression on the diminutive that chafes our ends.")

p. 279, l. 5 Since alls war that end war let sports be leisure and bring and buy fair.

p. 281, l. 15 But Bruto and Cassio are ware only of trifid tongues the whispered wilfulness, ('tis demonal!) and shadows shadows multiplying (il folsoletto nel falsoletto col fazzolotto dal fuzzolezzo), totients quotients, they tackle their quarrel.

p. 289, l. 4 . . . and it is veritably belied, we belove, that not allsods of esoupkans that's in the queen's pottage post and not allfinesof greendgold that the Indus contains would overinduce them . . . [*Macbeth*: "Not all the perfumes of Arabia . . ."]

p. 290, l. 5 (4.32 M.P., old time, to be precise, according to all three doctors waterburies that was Mac Auliffe and poor MacBeth and poor MacGhimley to the tickleticks . . .)

p. 295, l. 3 And for a night of thoughtsendyures and a day. As Great Shapesphere puns it.

p. 295, l. 23 All's fair on all fours, as my instructor unstrict me.

p. 302, Note 1 I loved to see the Macbeths Jerseys knocking spots of the Plumpduffs Pants.

p. 319, l. 19 And be the coop of his gobbos, Reacher The Thaurd, thinks your girth fatter, apopo of his buckseaseilers, nut where's H Horace's courtin troopers?

p. 321, l. 11 . . . a kiber galler dragging his hunker. [. . . "the toe of the peasant comes too near the heel of the courtier . . . he galls his kibe"—*Hamlet*.]

p. 335, l. 31 And it was the lang in the shirt in the green of the wood where obelisk rises when odalisks fall, major threft on the make and

jollyjacques spindthrift on the merry, (O Mr. Mathurin, they were calling, what a topheavy hat you're in! . . .)

*p. 340, l. 7* The field of karhags and that bloasted tree. Forget not the felled!

*p. 350, l. 21* I had my billyfell of duckish delights the whole pukny time on rawmeots and juliannes with their lambstoels in my in my kiddeneys and my ramsbutter in their sassenacher ribs . . .

*p. 377, l. 9* Nobody will know or heed you, Postumus, if you skip round schlymartin by the back and come front sloomutren to beg in one of the shavers' sailorsuits.

*p. 391, l. 18* . . . and because he forgot to remember to sign an old morning proxy paper, a writing in request to hersute herself, on stamped bronnanoileum, from Roneo to Giliette, before saying his grace before fish . . .

*p. 398, l. 21* . . . right glad we never shall forget, thoh the dayes gone still they loves young dreams and old Luke with his kingly leer, so wellworth watching, and Senchus Mor, possessed of evident notoriety, and another more of the bigtimers, to name no others, of whom great things were expected in the fulfilming department, for the lives of Lazarus and auld luke-syne . . .

*p. 410, l. 22* Speak to us of Emailia.

*p. 418, l. 17* So saida to Moyhammlet and marhaba to your Mount!

*p. 421, l. 26* But I would not care to be so unfruitful to my own part as to swear for the moment positively as to the views of Denmark.

*p. 422, l. 14* Obnoximost posthumust! With his unique hornbook and his prince of the apauper's pride, blundering all over the two worlds!

*p. 425, l. 23* Outragedy of poetscalds! Acomedy of letters! I have them all, tame, deep and harried, in my mine's I.

*p. 434, l. 3* Where it is nobler in the main to supper than the boys and errors of outrager's virtue. Give back ~~those~~ stolen kisses; restaure those all-cotton glooves. Recollect the yella perals that all too often beset green gerils, Rhidarhoda and Darakora, once they gethobby-horsical playing breeches parts for Bessy Sudlow in flesh-coloured pantos instead of earthing down in the coalhole trying to boil the big gun's dinner.

*p. 455, l. 12* Toborrow and toburrow and tobarrow! That's our crass, hairy and evergrim life, till one finel howdiedow Bouncer Naster raps on the bell with a bone and his stinkers stank behind him with the

sceptre and the hourglass. We may come, touch and ho, from atoms and ifs but we're presurely destined to be odd's without ends.

*p. 456, l. 23* . . . I'm fustfed like fungstif . . . [Falstaff?]

*p. 463, l. 6* He's the sneaking likeness of us, faith, me alter's ego in miniature and every Auxonian aimer's ace as nasal a Romeo as I am, for ever cracking quips on himself, that merry . . .

*p. 465, l. 30* Be ownkind. Be kithkinish. Be bloodysibby. Be irish. Be irish. Be offalia. Be hamlet. Be the property plot. Be Yorick and Lankystare. Be cool. Be mackinamucks of yourselves.

*p. 469, l. 20* Lead on, Macadam, and danked be he who first sights Halt Linduff!

*p. 468, l. 32* And, remember this, a chorines, there's the witch on the heath, sistra! . . .

*p. 469, l. 21* Now's nunc or nimmer, siskinder! Here goes the enemy! Bennydict hotfoots onimpudent stayers . . .

*p. 479, l. 30* He is a boat. You see him. The both how you see is they! Draken af Danemork! Sacked it or ate it? What! Hennu! Spake ab laut!

*p. 481, l. 13* . . . Finnsen Faynean, oceanyclived, to this same vulganized hillsir from yours, Mr. Tupling Toun of Morning de Heights with his lavast flow and his rambling undergroands, would he reoccur Ad Horam, as old Romeo Rogers, in city or county, and your sure ob, or by, with or from an urb, of you know the diferenciabus, as brauchbarred in apabhramsa, sierrah!

*p. 483, l. 16* I'll see you moved farther, blarneying Marcantonio! Whatcans such wretch to say to I or how have My to doom with him?

*p. 508, l. 20* Concaving now convexly to the semidemi-hemispheres and, from the female angle, music minnestirring, were the subligate sisters, P. and Q., Clopatrick's cherierapest, mutatis mutandis, in pretty much the same pickle, the peach of all pedom, the quest of all quicks?

*p. 515, l. 5* —Nnn ttt wrd?

—Dmn ttt thg.

—A gael galled by scheme of scorn? Nock?

—Sangnifying nothing. Mock!

—Fortitudinoecius rhodammum tenuit?

—Five maim! Or something very similar.

*p. 531, l. 18* Whisk! There's me shims and here's me hams and this is my juppettes, hause be the meter. Whisk! What's this? Whisk! And that? He never cotched finer, balay me, at Romiolo Frullini's Flea pantamine out of Griddle-the-Sink or Shusies-with-her-Soles-Up or La Sauzerelly, the pucieboots . . .

*p. 539, l. 4* I should tell you that honestly, on my honour of a Near-wicked, I always think in a wordworth's of that primed favourite continental poet, Daunty, Gouty and Shopkeeper, A.G., whom the generality admoyers in this that is and that this is to come.

*p. 540, l. 15* Here Tyeburn throttled, massed murmurs march: where the bus stops there shop I: here which ye see, yea reste.

*p. 563, l. 23* How frilled one shall be as at taledold of Formio and Cigarette! What folly innocents! theirs whet pep of puppyhood! Both barmhearts shall become yeastcake by their brackfast. I will to leave a my copperwise blessing between the pair of them, for rosen-gorge, for greenafang. Blech and tin soldies, . . .

*p. 569, l. 29* Mr. Messop and Mr. Borry will produce of themselves, as they're two genitalmen of Veruno, Senior Nowno and Senior Brolano (finaly! finaly!), all for love of a fair penitent that, a she be broughton, rhoda'a a rosy she. Their two big skins! How they strave to gat her! Such a boyplay! Their bouchicaulture! What tyronte power! . . .

Other authors jostle in this passage—Rhoda Broughton, Dion Boucicault—and a film star. I have not attempted to pick up these outside references. There are plenty of them—and many more references to Shakespeare. Enough will have been said to show how strongly Joyce's thought was coloured by Shakespearian allusions, and how deeply preoccupied he was with the problems which Shakespeare's tragedies face.

## CHAPTER V

THE next writer after Shakespeare to influence Joyce profoundly was Swift. Swift did not deal in the workings of the unconscious mind: he lived them. It is of course possible to regard Gulliver's account of the physical characteristics of the Brobdingnagian ladies, and the whole conception of the Yahoos, as the emergence of unconscious material, but, as this must apply in some degree to all forms of imaginative creation, we should get no further by so regarding it. What is beyond dispute is that the life history of this savagely inhibited man, whose relationships with so many people were poisoned at the source, who pursued women yet avoided the responsibilities entailed by their response to him, who himself commented on the "pretty gentleman" Sir William Temple had spoiled, and who knew, many years beforehand, that he was doomed to "die at the top", must offer to scrutiny as close as Joyce's a treasury of unconscious material, a magnificent opportunity for Joyce's kind of analysis. It is impossible to give any critical account of Swift without trying to investigate the motives which lay behind his conduct, the vacillations, the frenzies, the blowing of hot and cold, the agonies, the hatred of self, the savage indignation that lacerated his heart. This unlikely champion of Ireland has fascinated Irishmen of talent. In the past decade, Yeats and Lord Longford the dramatists, J. M. Hone the historian, have studied him. Yeats wrote him an epitaph as well as one of the finest one-act plays of the century, and it is noteworthy that he and Lord Longford deal with Swift's unconscious mind, Yeats from the psychic angle, invoking his ghost timelessly at a seance, Lord Longford from the psychological angle, ending his play with a riot of animated fantasies from Swift's mind. Mr. Hone's book, written in collaboration with the Italian scholar Mario Rossi, is as much a psychological study as a history.

On Joyce the impression made by Swift goes even deeper.



Much has been made of a similarity in both writers' attitude to the physical side of love and other bodily functions: the nightmare in *A Portrait of the Artist as A Young Man* could well have been inspired by the account of the Yahoos: but the influence of Swift on Joyce goes beyond likeness and coincidence. It is assimilated into the fabric of the mind. The "little language" of the *Journal to Stella* contributed to the vocabulary of *Finnegans Wake*, but the allusions to Swift's life are deeply woven into the book's texture. The short passage examined by Mr. Edmund Wilson<sup>1</sup> is one of many, and easier to detect than most, since it contains several references, of which the most terrifying is the glance at Swift's madness in "whose fingerings creep o'er skull" (*crépuscule*). Sometimes Swift is named directly.

Quok! Why, you haven't a passer! Fantastic! Early clever, surely doomed, to Swift's, alas, the galehus! Match of a matchness, like your Bigdud dadder in the boudeville song, *Gorotsky Gollovar's Troubles*, raucking his flavourite turvku in the smukking precincts of lydias, with Mary Owens and Dolly Monks seesidling to edge his cropulence and Blake-Roche, Kingston and Dockrell<sup>2</sup> auriscenting him from afurz, our papacocopotl, Abraham Bradley King . . . the mystery repeats itself todate as our callback mother Gaudyanna, that was daughter to a tanner, used to sing, as I think, now and then consinuously over her possetpot in her quer homolocous humminbass hesterdie and istherdie forivor. Vanissas Vanistatums! And for a night of thoughtsendyures and a day. As Great Shapessphere puns it.

At other times, the references, though copious and clear, are not so immediately obvious:

Sis dearest, Jaun added, with voise somewhit murky, what though still high fa luting, as he turned his dorse to her to pay court to it, and ouverleaved his booseys to give the note and score, phonoscopically incuriosited and melancholic this time whiles, as on the fulmament he gaped in wulderment, his onsaturncast eyes in stellar

<sup>1</sup> *The Wound and the Bow*, p. 161.

<sup>2</sup> Blackrock, Kingstown and Dalkey, suburbs of Dublin (Dockrell is a well-known Dublin name: one of its members was a champion swimmer, who competed often at Kingstown and Blackrock). Another version of the three suburbs appeared earlier, in a Shakespearian context, when Blackrock was "Bleak-rooky." Note "Blakeroche" and "Shapessphere." The three ghosts are present: they are never far apart, nor far away.

attraction followed swift to an imaginary swellaw, O, the vanity of Vanissy! All ends vanishing! Personally, Grog help me, I am in no violent hurry.

It is in Swift's deeper mental processes that Joyce is interested, and, as always with him, his respect for the genius makes his scrutiny the closer and more dispassionate.

The references to Swift in *Finnegans Wake* are very numerous. Swift and everything to do with him had become part of the pattern of Joyce's thought, and it would be a labour of research to trace every allusion, not only to Swift by name, but to the places and persons that were connected with his life, and to the "little language" of the Journals.<sup>1</sup>

2

The selection that follows is arbitrary, but it will give some idea of the persistence of Swift in Joyce's mind. Some of the allusions are combined with references to other writers and other characters with the same or similar names. The most frequent association is, naturally enough, with Stella, and Vanessa is a close second. Sir William Temple and Moor Park are seldom far away. With Swift often appears, in contrast, Sterne; as a further instance of the eternal opposition—Shem-Shaun, Mookse-Gripes, introvert-extravert, which is a major theme of the book.

<sup>1</sup> The "little language" was used when Swift played with Stella as a child at Moor Park. Swift himself was Pdfr or Fr for Podefar. Stella was Ppt. MD also meant Stella, or Stella and Mrs. Dingley, who by herself is MED, or DD.

The letters r and l are interchanged. Lele means "there" and "truly". Here are a few samples, echoed by Joyce:

XLI. Nite der MD. Nite deeleast sollahs . . . tomollow . . . Night my deeleast lives . . . Nite deeleast logues . . . Nite der logues . . . must carry zis in my pottick . . . it im vely rate now . . . ung oomens . . .

XLII. . . . own dee dallahs. Rove Pdfr.

XLIII. Night noun . . . deeleast sollahs . . . Nite, nuntyes nine . . . lele, and lele aden . . . Hold ee tongue, oo Ppt . . .

XLVI. . . . a long letter for a kick body . . . cause see in a dood daller in odle sings . . . iss I tan.

L. Lele's fol oo now—and lele's fol oo rattle, and every kind of sing you are a whetter, fais . . .

LVII. I'll take my reeve . . .

I have not annotated the references except in two or three places; part of the fun is to spot them for oneself.

p. 3, l. 11 . . . not yet, though venissoon after, had a kidscad buttended a bland old isaac: not yet, though all's fair in vanessy, were sosie sesthers wroth with twone nathandjoe.

p. 10, l. 4 This is hiona hinnessy laughing aloud at the Willingdone.

p. 15, l. 12 The babbblers with their thangas vain have been (confusium hold them!) they were and went; thigging thugs were and houhnhyms songtoms were and comely norgels were and pollyfool fiansees.

p. 36, l. 35 Gaping Gill, swift to mate errthors, stern to checkself, (diagnosing through eustacetube that it was to make with a markedly postpuberal hypertituitary type of Heidelberg mannleich cavern ethics) lufted his slopingforward, bad Sweatagore good murrough . . . [Sweatagore recalls Laracor.]

p. 57, ll. 19-30 [A passage of some length combines Swift and Isolda's Liebestod with the love-death of Vanessa, and with Dodgson, author of *Alice in Wonderland*.]

p. 101, l. 7 The war is o'er. Wimwim wimwim! Was it Unity Moore or Estella Swifte or Varina Fay or Quarta Quaadam!

p. 107, l. 14 . . . the eternal chimerahunter Oriolopos, now frond of sugars, then lief of saults, the sensory crowd in his belly coupled with an eye for the goods trooth bewilderblissed by their night effluvia with guns like drums and fondlers like forceps persequestellates his vanessas from flore to flore. Somehow this sounds like the purest kidooleyoon wherein our madernacerution of lour lore is rich.

p. 162, l. 14 (. . . the Coucousien oafsprung of this sun of a kuk is as sattin as there's a tub in Tobolsk)

p. 173, l. 3 Did you anywhere, kennel, on your gullible's travels or during your rural troubadouring, happen to stumble upon a certain gay young nobleman . . .

p. 173, l. 22 . . . Mr. Humhum, whom history, climate and entertainment made the first of his sept and always up to debt, though Eavens ear ow many fines he faces, and another moment visanvrerssas cruaching three jeers (pah!) for his rotten little ghost of a Peppybeg, Mr. Himmyshimmy . . .

p. 174, ll. 24-7 . . . parsonal violence . . . Mr. Vanhomrigh's house . . .

*p. 177, l. 10* Sheols of houris in chems upon divans, (revolted stellas vespertine vesamong them) at a bare (O)! mention of the scaly rybald exclaimed: Poisse!

*p. 177, l. 13* But would anyone, short of a madhouse, believe it? Neither of those clean little cherubum, Nero or Nobookisonester himself, ever nursed such a spoiled opinion of his monstrous marvelosity as did this mental and moral defective (here perhaps at the vanessance of his lownest) . . .

*p. 179, l. 28* . . . This semidemented zany . . . turning over three sheets at a wind, telling himself delightedly, no espellor mor so, that every splurge on the vellum he blundered over was an aisling vision more gorgeous than the one before t.i.t.s., . . .

*p. 192, l. 20* . . . and the cock crows for Danmark. (O Jonathan, your estomach!) The simian has no sentiment secretions but weep cataracts for all me, Pain the Shamman!

*p. 212, l. 19* My colonial, wardha bagful! A bakereen's dusind with tithe tillies to boot. That's what you may call a tale of a tub.

*p. 212, l. 29* Only snuffers' cornets drifts my way that the cracka dvine chucks out of his cassock, with her estheryear's marsh narcissus to make him recant his vanitty fair.

*p. 232, l. 9* When (pip) a message interfering intermitting interskips from them (pet!) on herzian waves, (call her Venicey names! call her a stell!) a butterfly from her zip-clasped handbag, a wounded dove astartd from, escaping out her firecotes.

*p. 257, l. 1* What is amaid today todo? So angelland all weeping bin that Izzy most unhappy is. Fain Essie fie onhapje? laughs her stella's vispirine.

*p. 272, l. 17* Here, Hengeqst and Horsesance, take your heads out of that taletub . . . Where he fought the shessock of his stimstammer and we caught the pepettes of our lovelives.

*p. 278, Note 3* When I'am Enastella and am taken for Essatessa I'll do that droop on the pohlmann's piano.

*p. 294, l. 15* Fantastic! Early clever, surely doomed, to Swift's, alas, the galehus! Match of a matchness, like your Bigdud dadder in the boudeville song, *Gorotsky Gollovar's Troubles*, raucking his flavour-ite turvku in the smukking precincts of lydias . . . [galehus = mad-house.]

*p. 295, l. 2* Vanissas Vanistatums! And for a night of thought-sendyures and a day . . .

*p. 295, l. 27* O, dear me, that was very nesse! Very nace indeed!

*p. 327, l. 10* . . . never a Hyderow Jenny the like of her lightness at look and you leap, rheadoromanscing long evmans invairn, about little Anny Roners and all the Lavinias of ester yours and pleding for them to herself in the periglus glatsch hangs over her trickle bed, . . .

*p. 335, l. 25* . . . half for the laugh of the bliss it sint barbaras another doesend end once tale of a tublin wished on to him with its olives ocolombs and its hills owns ravings and Tutty his tour in his Nowhare's yarcht.

*p. 347, l. 25* Toumbalo, how was I acclapadad! From them banjo-peddllars on the raid. Gidding up me anti vanillas and getting off the stissas me aunties. Boxerising and coxerusing.

*p. 354, l. 34* So till butagain budly shoots thon rising germinal let bodley chow the fatt of his anger and badley bide the toil of his tubb.

*p. 365, l. 26* My little love apprencisses, my dears, the estelles, van Nessies von Nixies voon der pool, which I had a reyal devouts for yet was it marly lowease or just a feel with these which olderman K.K.

*p. 387, l. 8* . . . the improper colleges . . . forkbearded and bluetoothed and bellied and boneless, from Strathlyffe and Aylesburg and North-umberland Anglesey, the whole yaghoodurt sweepstakings and all the horsepowers. But now, talking of hayastdanars and wolkingology and how our seaborn isle came into exestuanee . . .

*p. 413, l. 20* O what must the grief of my mind be for two little ptpt coolies worth twenty thousand quad here witnessed with both's maddlemass wishes to Pipette for their next match from their dearly beloved Roggers, M.D.D.O.D. . . . Hopsoloosely kidding you are totether with your cadenus and goat along nose how we shall complete that white paper. Two venusstas! Biggerstiff! Qweer but gaon! Be trouz and wholetrouz! Otherwise, frank Shaun, we pursued, what would be the autobiography of your softbodied fumiform?

*p. 427, l. 6* . . . he spoorlessly disappaled and vanesshed, like a popo down a papa, from circular circulatic.

*p. 433, l. 3* Here she's, is a bell, that's wares in heaven, virginwhite Undetrigesima, vikissy manonna.

*p. 449, l. 1* . . . phonoscopically incuriosited and melancholic this time whiles, as on the fulmament he gaped in wulderment, his

onsaturncast eyes in stellar attraction followed swift to an imaginary swellow, O, the vanity of Vanissy! All ends vanishing!

*p. 462, l. 7* Esterelles, be not on your weeping what though Shauna-thaun is in his fail!

*p. 467, l. 22* . . . the facitation of codding chaplain and king as homely gauche as swift B.A.A. . . . Twas the quadra sent him and Trinity too.

*p. 471, l. 6* . . . but in selfrighting the balance of his corporeity to reexchange widerembrace with the pillarbosom of the Dizzier he loved prettier, between estellos and venoussas, bad luck to the lie but when next to nobody expected, their star and gartergazer at the summit of his climax, he toppled a lipple on to the off and, making a brandnew start for himself to run down his easting, by blessing hesstherers with the sign of the southern cross . . .

*p. 478, l. 26* Trinathan partnick dieudonnay. Have you seen her? Typette, my tactile O!

*p. 479, l. 35* Allmaun away when you hear the ganghorn. And meet Nautsen. Ess Ess. O ess. Warum night!

*p. 486, l. 25* Purely, in a pure manner. O, sey but swift and still a vain essaying! Trothed today, trenned tomorrow.

*p. 490, l. 12* Now, I am earnestly asking you, and putting it as between this yohou and that houmonymh, will just you search through your gabgut memoirs for all of two minutes for this impersonating pronolan, fairhead on foulshoulders.

*p. 491, l. 18* And he had ta barraw tha watarcross shartclaths aff tha arkbashap as Yarak!

—Braudribnob's on the bummel?

—And lillypets on the lea.

*p. 500, l. 21* Sold! I am sold! Brinabride! My ersther! My sidster! . . . I sold. Pipette dear! Us! us! me! me! . . . me! I'm true. True! Isolde. Pipette. My precious . . . Pipette! Pipette, my priceless one!

*p. 511, l. 25* Was she wearing shubladey's tiroirs in humour of her hubbishobbis, Massa's star stellar?

*p. 528, l. 11* And listen, you, you beauty, esster, I'll be clue to who knows you, pray Magda, Marthe with Luz and Joan, while I lie with warm lisp on the Tolka. (I'm fay!)

*p. 540, l. 25* Our bourse and politico-ecomedie are in safe with good

Jock Shepherd, our lives are on sure in sorting with Jonathans, wild and great. [Jack Sheppard and Jonathan Wild bring in a different series of associations.]

p. 551, l. 29 was I not rosetted on two stellas of little egypt?

p. 553, l. 31 whereon, in mantram of truemen like yahoomen (expect till dutc cundoctor summoneth him all fahrts to pay, velkommen all hankinhunkn in this vongn of Hoseyeh!), claudesdales withe arabinstreeds, . . .

p. 564, l. 30 Hystorical leavesdroppings may also be garnered up with sir Shamus Swiftpatrick, Archfieldchaplain of Saint Lucan's.

p. 568, l. 29 Thisafter, swift's mightmace deposing, he shall aadress to His Serenemost by a speechreading from his miniated vellum . . .

p. 583, l. 8 The galleonman jovial on his bucky brown nightmare. Bigrob dignagging his lylyputtana. One to one bore one! (Earwicker in bed with his wife.)

p. 596, l. 30 . . . and pfor to pfinish our pfun of a pfan coalding the kedddle mickwhite; sure, straight, slim, sturdy, serene, synthetical, swift.

p. 620, l. 13 Heel trouble and heal travel. Galliver and Gellover.

p. 423, l. 4 . . . all the tell of the tud . . .

It must be emphasised that no mere cataloguing of allusions can do more than suggest the power over Joyce's thought, both conscious and unconscious, of the tragic figure who has been a symbol to so many Irishmen of talent. There is in Swift's story something germane to the Irish character, and especially to the situation of the artist in Ireland.

. . . Imitate him if you dare,  
World-besotted traveller; he  
Served human liberty.<sup>1</sup>

### 3

William Blake, third of the ghosts that attended Stephen, has been classed as a psychotic type, and was looked upon as a lunatic by the majority of his contemporaries. In the sense that with him the contents of the unconscious mind poured into

<sup>1</sup> W. B. YEATS: *Epitaph on Swift*.

and dominated his consciousness, this is true: but with the essential difference that there was no inner rebellion, there were no mutineers, since Blake's consciousness hardly offered a show of opposition; the inner world coloured and was in full communion with the outer, while Blake looked on, not as a check for the reality of his inner vision, but as a bothersome obstruction.

I assert for My Self, that I do not behold the outer Creation and that to me it is hindrance and not Action; it is as the dirt upon my feet, No part of Me. 'What,' it will be question'd, 'When the Sun rises, do you not see a round disk of fire somewhat like a Guinea? O no, no, I see an innumerable company of the Heavenly host crying, Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord God Almighty. I question not my Corporeal or Vegetative Eye any more than I would question a Window concerning a sight. I look thro' it and not with it.

This is uncompromising, but it is not the language of a lunatic, nor even of a neurotic boldly rationalising his complexes. Blake knew what he was about, and his unconscious never caught him napping. With him, the level of consciousness was different from the ordinary. He perceived vividly with his senses much that other people felt only as vague mental impressions or did not perceive at all. The extraordinary serenity which so astonished visitors in his later years came from a harmony between inner and outer worlds, between unconscious and conscious, which happens very seldom and is unmistakably impressive when it does.<sup>1</sup> This does not mean that Blake was at all woolly or uncertain in his view of the material world. He saw it with terrifying clearness, but its objects were to him the symbols of a transcendent reality, and their main use was to give him, through concentration on their beauties, a better view of the reality they stood for.

To see a World in a Grain of Sand  
And a Heaven in a Wild Flower,  
Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand  
And Eternity in an hour.

Here is solved the whole neurotic resentment of time. If this is psychosis, then psychiatry would be glad of a dose of it.

<sup>1</sup> AE had it. Joyce was given many opportunities to make himself acquainted with it.



Here is the right relationship of conscious to unconscious; and here is the very heart of the Romantic creed. Blake was not accredited among the leaders of the Romantic Movement, but it was left to him to state their case for them.

This *credo*, the attempt to see the universe in the microcosm, sang happily in the ears of the writer who took Dublin as the type and figure of the world, and who, by concentration on its particular features, was to be made free of all the world had. "In the intense instant of imagination," Stephen says in *Ulysses*, "when the mind, Shelley says, is a fading coal, that which I was is that which I am and that which in possibility I may come to be." In *Finnegans Wake*, the range lengthens. The mind is free, not only to move backward and forward in its own experience, but in the experience of others. Blake offers the passport. It is to concentrate upon the particular instance until the trance of imagination falls on him and the mind is freed.

Blake had one more attraction for the author of *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake*. He composed anagrammatic words, symbolically to convey an esoteric knowledge.

#### 4

A distinguished piece of research, published since these studies were made, has enormously emphasised the importance to Joyce of Blake and his thought. Mr. W. P. Witcutt, in his *Blake: A Psychological Interpretation*, shows past question that Blake's philosophical system was an anticipation of the psychological system of Jung, on which Joyce so heavily leaned. Blake's Four Zoas,

And every Man stood Fourfold; each Four Faces had,<sup>1</sup>

correspond to Jung's four Functions: Los standing for Intuition, Urizen for Thought, Luvah for Feeling, and Tharmas for Sensation.

There are further correspondences, for which the reader is referred to Mr. Witcutt's excellent small book: but this main correspondence is enough to show how essential Blake's thought

<sup>1</sup> Jerusalem.

was to Joyce, both in its affinity to Jung's and because Blake stood as the extreme and perfect Romantic. Here was the kind of synthesis, the circle within a circle, that Joyce loved: and one can imagine the depth of emotion with which he traced the resemblances between these great originals.

A further bond between Blake and Joyce must never be forgotten, though it will be clearer at a later stage of this study. Both Blake and Joyce followed undeviatingly a purpose which was in the last analysis religious. Both rejected current statements of faith. Both relied on their own judgment, their own vision, to a degree beyond the reach of arrogance. "In Blake, wrote Sturge Moore,<sup>1</sup>

the English presumption of a God-illuminated judgment reached its acme of assurance; no writer of the same force has deviated from initial impulse so little, or gathered less from experience and observation. The path of destiny was for him strangely straight and bright.

And, a few pages further on, he observes that Blake's prophetic writings

were intended to present Christianity afresh

Leaving aside the second observation<sup>2</sup>—I shall return to it later—there is a clear parallel between Blake's and Joyce's persistence and inner certainty.<sup>3</sup> Joyce, who cut short his intake of material in June 1904, who submitted to drudgery sooner than write to please others, who deferred to no man, who looked into himself for truth, and who, in *Finnegans Wake*, set himself a task of such immensity that he was prepared to stake his soul for its completion, had fundamental things in common with the poet who envisaged the marriage of Heaven and Hell; who realised that our darker impulses are to be redeemed, not strangled,<sup>4</sup> and, in

<sup>1</sup> *Art and Life*, 1910.

<sup>2</sup> "The most ethically orthodox of the more eminent writers of my time is Mr. Joyce . . . penetrated with Christian feeling"—T. S. ELIOT: *After Strange Gods*.

<sup>3</sup> "In contrast to those whom we call materialists, Mr. Joyce is spiritual"—VIRGINIA WOOLF: *The Common Reader*.

<sup>4</sup> "Psycho-analysis . . . reclamation work . . . like the draining of the Zuyder Zee"—FREUD, quoted by LIONEL TRILLING, *Horizon*, September, 1947.

that realisation, made the link between the Romantic movement and twentieth century psychology which meant so much to Joyce.

These points will be clearer when we are in a position to see what Joyce was at in *Finnegans Wake*. For the moment, let us be content with showing Joyce's need of Blake, and the affinity between the two.

5

I shall give only a few of the Blake references, in order not to disturb the argument that follows from his position as a John the Baptist for the Romantic movement: a position strengthened, theoretically, at least, by a recent comment on Romanticism made by Mr. Alex Comfort.<sup>1</sup> In any case, they are more obscure, more difficult to find, since often the allusion is to one of Blake's anagrammatic personifications, which, after Joyce had further complicated it, is translated to a Bottom-like degree of strangeness.

p. 57, l. 7 They answer from their Zoans; Hear the four of them!  
Har torroar of them!

p. 62, l. 11 . . . a lotruse land, a luctose land . . . Emerald in illuim,  
the peasant pastured, in which by the fourth commandment with  
promise his days apostolic were to be long by the abundant mercy of  
Him Which Thundereth From On High, murmured, would rise  
against him with all which in them were, franchisables and in-  
habitands . . .

p. 63, l. 21 . . . he had had had o' gloriously a' lot too much hanguest  
or hoshoe fine to drink in the House of Blazes, the Parrot in Hell, the  
Orange Tree, the Glibt, the Sun, the Holy Lamb, and lapse not leashed,  
in Ramitdown's ship hotel since the morning moment . . . he falsetook  
for a cattlepillar with the purest peacablest intentions.

<sup>1</sup> For me, romanticism implies a belief that humanity, by virtue of the development of autonomous mind, is in a constant state of conflict with the external universe: a conflict in face of the human instinct for survival, with death and with those members of the human race who have lost their nerve and sided with death against man; the advocates of power—*The Novel in Our Time*.

p. 80, l. 22 And it is as though where Agni araflammed and Mithra monished and Shiva slew as mayamutras the obluvia waters of our noarchic memory withdrew . . .

A most interesting and compressed passage identifies the Four Zoas, the Four Elements and the Four Old Men (Evangelists).

p. 223, l. 9 He askit of the hoothed fireshield but it was untergone into the matthued heaven. (Los, sun, fire, Matthew.) He soughed it from the luft but that bore ne mark ne message. (air, Mark) He loked upon the bloomingrund where ongly his corns were growning. (Luke, earth.) And he listed back to beckline how she pranked alone so johntily. (water, John)

p. 294, l. 23 . . . raucking his flavourite turvku in the smukking precincts of lydias, with Mary Owens and Dolly Monks seesidling to edge his corpulence and Blake-Roche, Kingston and Dockrell auri-scenting him from afurtz . . .

p. 409, l. 19 No later than a very few fortnichts since I was meeting on the Thinker's Dam with a pair of men out of glasshouse whom I shuffled hands with named MacBlacks—I think their names is Mac-Blakes.

p. 563, l. 14 He will be quite within the pale when with lordbeeron brow he vows him so tosset to be of the sir Blake tribes bleak while through life's unblest he rode backs of bannars. Are you not somewhat bulgar with your bowels? Whatever do you mean with bleak? With pale blake I write tintingface. O, you do? And with steel-white and blackmail I ha'scint for my sweet an anemone's letter with a gold of my bridest hair betied. [Byron and Moore come into this, the latter through his song *When through life unblest I rove*.]

Blake had yet another message for Joyce. Joyce was a thinker who had suppressed his feeling side. Stephen Dedalus is afraid of his mother and her claims upon him. As if in compensation, *Ulysses* ends in a rhapsody of feminine affirmation, which at the end of *Finnegans Wake* is made stronger, deeper, more universal. Throughout *Finnegans Wake* Joyce, how consciously and deliberately we cannot be sure, is, in Jung's terms, paying tribute to the anima, the feminine principle in his own unconscious, and letting it take its rightful place in the book, that was for so long his inner life. For most men the problem

is to come to terms with the anima: and no man proclaimed this truth more passionately than Blake. Shakespeare had given it exquisite form in *The Winter's Tale*, where Leontes exposes Perdita, rejecting the feminine principle in his own soul. At once he loses his son; his wife is turned to a statue; the oracle, the voice of religion, declares that he shall have no heir "till that which is lost be found." Not till, healed by time, he accepts the neglected side of his own nature can Hermione cease to be a statue, and become once more warm and responsive.<sup>1</sup>

To all this, for both inner and outer life, Blake would shout "Amen!" In Mr. Middleton Murry's words,<sup>2</sup>

For Blake, the power of Religion and the dominion of the Female were inextricably interwoven . . . The foundation of all his teaching, the indispensable condition of the realization he was trying to impart, was "the expunging of the notion that man has a body, distinct from his soul" . . .<sup>3</sup>

When two Identities fulfil each the other's desire, their Sex is manifestly the gateway into Eternity.

This was a lesson deeply needed by Joyce. *Finnegans Wake* shows how deeply it was being learned. What in *Ulysses* had been defiant and clamorous has become part of the essential fabric of thought. In the earlier work, feeling, kept under by irony and intellect, was liable to explode. Now, in the depths of the psyche, it is admitted, and can irrigate the formal design. Anna Livia flows at her own pace and with much of her own waywardness towards the inevitable embrace of the ocean.

<sup>1</sup> This is a bald and inadequate summary of the theory developed in a most interesting paper, unpublished up to the time of writing these lines, by Mr. Housman, of the University of Nottingham.

<sup>2</sup> J. MIDDLETON MURRY: *William Blake*.

<sup>3</sup> "Man has no body distinct from his Soul, for that called Body is a portion of Soul discerned by the five Senses, the chief inlets of Soul in this age."

## CHAPTER VI

WITH the Romantic Movement we reach the first open avowal of the unconscious as a factor in English writing. Indeed, Mr. F. L. Lucas has made this quality his definition of the term "romantic" in literature: that which releases the less conscious levels of the mind.<sup>1</sup> In the preface to *Lyrical Ballads*, Coleridge foresaw something of this, in choosing for his share.

. . . persons and characters supernatural, or at least romantic: yet so as to transfer from our inward nature a human interest and a semblance of truth sufficient to procure for these shadows of imagination that willing suspension of disbelief for the moment which constitutes poetic faith.

The censorship of the conscious mind was to be lulled, and its attention distracted, so that the contraband could be smuggled through. Presently, Coleridge saw the business in a clearer light. Writing of Wordsworth's *Immortality* ode, he said that it

. . . was intended for such readers only as had been accustomed to watch the flux and reflux of their inmost nature, to venture at times into the twilight realms of consciousness, and to feel a deep interest in modes of inmost being, to which they know that the attributes of time and space are inapplicable and alien, but which can yet not be conveyed save in symbols of time and space.<sup>2</sup>

Elsewhere he says:

In every work of art there is a reconciliation of the external with the internal; the conscious is so impressed on the unconscious as to appear in it.<sup>3</sup>

This is getting warm: but we must not jump too eagerly at "the unconscious". Coleridge was coming to a definition of a

<sup>1</sup> *The Decline of the Romantic Tradition*.

<sup>2</sup> *Biographia Literaria*, Ch. XXII. <sup>3</sup> *Ibid*.

state of which, naturally and through addiction, he had experience: he had, as these passages show, got beyond the purely privative notion, not-conscious, which survives in the views of some psychologists even today. With Shelley, who protested against the intrusion into poetry of the poet's personal ideas of right and wrong, on the grounds that they were conditioned by his time and the place where he lived, whereas poetry "partakes of neither", Coleridge realised the positive power of our "inmost nature" and "modes of inmost being" and knew that inspiration, if it did not start, was first perceived there: but a very long discussion would be necessary before he and the disciple of Freud or Jung or Adler could be sure that, when they said "the unconscious", they were talking about the same thing.<sup>1</sup> But the three ghosts—we may leave out St. Thomas Aquinas at the moment—were sounding a harmony in Joyce's mind. The three distinctive notes made a chord to which his tenor added a fourth. They told him that his evolution from an external writer to one who sought to record "modes of inmost being" was predestined, right, and in the great tradition. They bade him venture boldly into the "twilight realms of consciousness". And they strongly hinted at the way to do it. It was the way in which, from the first, Joyce had trained himself to write, by direct, one might almost say myopic concentration on the particular image. As the clairvoyant concentrates the whole of her conscious attention upon the point of light on the surface of the crystal, in order that her unconscious mind may be set free to see, so the artist focussed his conscious attention on the minute particular, the thing immediately before him, in order to see beyond it. To peer at the grain of sand, and in one's inmost nature see a universe: to walk in memory down Middle Abbey Street, of a summer's day in 1904, encountering the shops and offices in order, their smells, sounds, and colours, and recalling the exact features and peculiarities of those who served in them, and thereby to have the freedom of all cities at all times: to be, at a given moment, all that he had been and all that possibly he might yet be: from a fixed point in time and space to enter those realms that partook of neither: from the shadow on the

<sup>1</sup> A great many of their disciples cannot be sure even now.

wall of the cave to read the reality that threw it: these were the aims and the preoccupations of the artist who, in *Finnegans Wake*, set himself as great a task as any artist in history. "Romantic art," says Mr. John Piper,

"deals with the particular. The particularization of Bewick about a bird's wing, of Turner about a waterfall or a hill town, or of Rossetti about Elizabeth Siddall, is the result of a vision that can see in these things something significant beyond ordinary significance: something that for a moment seems to contain the whole world; and, when the moment is past, carries over some comment on life or experience besides the comment on appearances."<sup>1</sup>

The artist who is to make such vision his whole endeavour, who instead of an occasional penetration into his inmost nature is to set up house there, needs a technique to make such vision frequent, then habitual. To Joyce, preoccupied always with technique, the task was ideal. "The fascination of what's difficult"—he could agree there with Yeats, Yeats to whom Shakespeare, Swift, and Blake had as much to say as to him, and who knew that "poets are not allowed to shoot beyond the tangible".<sup>2</sup> It is to the utmost *precision* of imagery that the twilight consciousness of the *Anna Livia Plurabelle* section is due: and such suggestive precision, such certainty of incantation, qualities which Joyce and Yeats command to an astonishing degree, belong to Romantic art. To those who take pleasure in classification we present the conclusion that Joyce, despite what Dr. Johnson might have called the "very cynical asperity" of his jibes at the outward trappings of romance, is a writer in the Romantic tradition, and that *Finnegans Wake* is the logical conclusion of the Romantic movement in European literature.

## 2

The first mention of the unconscious in the sense in which the word is used today comes from that brilliant and eccentric psychologist Carl Gustav Carus, who was personal physician to the King of Saxony around the middle of the last century.

<sup>1</sup> British Romantic Artists.

<sup>2</sup> *Per Amica Silentia Lunae*.



Carus, a pioneer student of the relationship of body and mind, anticipated by a very few years the Englishman, E. S. (Eneas Sweetland) Dallas, who, after a period of neglect, is beginning to receive some of the attention his powers deserve. Dallas' *Poetics* (1852) has more than a hint:

In full self-consciousness we can never get beyond the shallows; the tide of feeling is far out, and there is nothing to be sounded . . .

and he goes on to speak of "the Law of Unconsciousness". But in the ill-titled *The Gay Science* (1866) we are given something far more explicit.

Outside consciousness there rolls a vast tide of life, which is, perhaps, even more important to us than the little isle of our thoughts which lies within our ken. Comparisons, however, between the two are vain, because each is necessary to the other. The thing to be firmly seized is, that we live in two concentric worlds of thought—an inner ring, of which we are conscious, and which may be described as illuminated; an outer one, of which we are unconscious, and which may be described as in the dark. Between the outer and the inner ring, between our unconscious and our conscious existence, there is a free and constant but unobserved traffic for ever carried on. Trains of thought are continuously passing to and fro, from the light into the dark, and back from the dark into the light. When the current of our thought flows from within our ken to beyond our ken, it is gone, we forget it, we know not what has become of it. After a time, it comes back to us changed and grown, as if it were a new thought, and we know not whence it comes.

This is remarkable: and it is presently given an even more Freudian twist.

Strictly speaking, the mind never forgets: what it once seizes, it holds to the death, and cannot let go.

The seed sown by the Romantics was flowering strongly and being admitted to the formal gardens. "I cannot help observing," wrote Mark Pattison,

"the remarkable force with which the Unconscious—*das Unbewusst*—vindicated its power. The weight of this element in human affairs is so unmistakable that whole theologies have been founded upon

the observation of the working of this single power, e.g., Calvinism and Mahometanism. By whatever name you call it, the Unconscious is found controlling each man's destiny without, or in defiance of, his will."<sup>1</sup>

This is further off from us than Dallas, yet it shows how the general idea is being domesticated. But we are soon back in the main line of growth. A few years before Pattison was compelled to make his remark, further anticipations of the theories of Freud and Jung came from a somewhat unexpected quarter. Lafcadio Hearn, who came out before Nietzsche with his theory of Recurrence,<sup>2</sup> began on obvious lines in a letter to a friend, dated 1878.

Everyone has an inner life of his own—which no other eye can see, and the great secrets of which are never revealed, although occasionally when we create something beautiful, we betray a glimpse of it—sudden and brief, as of a door opening and shutting in the night.<sup>3</sup>

This does not help us much: but he soon gets further:

We feel without understanding feeling; and our most powerful emotions are the most indefinable. This must be so, because they are inherited accumulations of feeling, and the multiplicity of them—super-imposed one over another, blurs them and makes them dim . . . *Unconscious* brain-work is best to develop such latent feeling and thought . . . Our best work is out of the unconscious.<sup>4</sup>

Again:

It is incontrovertible that in every individual brain is locked up the inherited memory of the absolutely inconceivable multitude of experiences of all the brains of which it is the descendant. But this scientific assurance of self in the past is uttered in no materialistic sense. Science is the destroyer of materialism . . .<sup>5</sup>

Brave words, in 1895. One more quotation:

It may be that profundities of self—abysses never reached by any ray from the life of sun—are strangely stirred in slumber . . . Trust

<sup>1</sup> *Memoirs* (1885).

<sup>2</sup> *Fantastes* (1880).

<sup>3</sup> *The Life and Letters of Lafcadio Hearn*, Vol. I.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> *Kokoro: The Idea of Pre-Existence*.

to your own dream life : study it carefully and draw your inspiration from that.<sup>1</sup>

We see, once more, that ideas evolve as do types : or, to keep within a more appropriate imagery, that water, pushing its way up from below the earth to daylight, appears as a trickle in several places before it finally bursts through in so strong a stream that all see it, and hail or revile a genius. Freud had behind him more than the psychological investigations of Mesmer, Charcot, Breuer, Janet and other specialists. He had the scattered thinkers, a Carus here, a Dallas there, and, far more powerful, he had the great main stream of European literature, the Russians, Blake, the Romantics, Goethe, the Jacobeans, Shakespeare, the Greeks. He acknowledged it, borrowing his vocabulary from the Greeks, and, while his work was still young, turning his interpretative technique upon a novel : using upon literature a tool which literature had helped to forge. Freud's examination of William Jensen's novel, *Gradiva*, is the first deliberate attempt to apply the technique of psycho-analysis to a work of fiction. Many critics followed the lead, and a great deal of valuable work was done. In this country, for instance, Mr. Robert Graves examined a number of poems in the same light, and was led by his success to formulate a general axiom :<sup>2</sup>

When conflicting issues disturb his mind, which in its conscious state is unable to reconcile them logically, the poet acquires the effect of self-hypnotism, as practised by the witch-doctors, his ancestors in poetry.

And, he might have added, by the clairvoyants and all those who, by concentrating on a single image, enable their unconscious mind to act. Mr. Graves's work caught up, quite independently, Yeats's remark that we make poetry out of the quarrel with ourselves:<sup>3</sup> and we may cite, as an interesting complementary view, different as the two characters were different, but still complementary, an outburst of AE in a review of a book by the present writer :

<sup>1</sup> *Interpretations of Literature.*

<sup>2</sup> *On English Poetry.*

<sup>3</sup> *Per Amica Silentia Lunae.*

It is right for the poet to use all art and intellect in shaping a speech but the starry words come like moths to the light, and the poet has to set up a fire in himself to attract them . . . Our poet thinks he can fashion his style first and then cast his net in the great deep.<sup>1</sup>

More recently, Day Lewis has followed his three compatriots in stressing the part played by the unconscious in the writing of poetry. It is hardly necessary to pile up recent applications of psycho-analytic technique to literary criticism, but mention should be made of Herbert Read's Clarke Lectures at Cambridge, 1929-30, and of the work of one of the most penetrating of contemporary critics, Edmund Wilson, and of the Shakespearean criticisms of Professor Wilson Knight.<sup>2</sup>

3

It is probable, however, that the best field for a study of the working of the unconscious mind in literature has been the novel. In the nineteenth century there was a great outpouring of material, most of it from Russia. Even a very superficial acquaintance with the work of the great Russian novelists shows that those problems of personality which arise from disorders in the unconscious mind had an extraordinary interest for them. Gogol, himself a neurotic, was fascinated by the phenomena of a split personality. His *Memoirs of a Madman* (1835) is a study of fantasy ending in psychosis and the asylum.

Dostoevski, whose narrow escape from execution was in itself excuse for a more uncontrollable gang of inner mutineers than in fact afflicted him, ranges almost the whole field of unconscious disturbance. Starting early with a study of split personality, *The Double*, he proceeded to investigations of such detail and insight that his novels have suffered in this century from being treated as case books. The "mortal wound" of inner disorder led him to try, throughout his working life, to understand the nature of dreams, and to show their value and meaning as symbolic projections of the unconscious into the conscious

<sup>1</sup> *The Irish Statesman*, March 1923.

<sup>2</sup> *The Crown of Life*.

mind. Raskolnikov's dream of his attempt to kill the old woman a second time, crashing the axe in frenzy upon her skull, only to see her shake with laughter at him, and his even more terrible dream of the lascivious child, when he realises in horror that her conduct springs from his own unconscious desire, are two examples from very many of dreams recorded and read by a fascinated analyst. Throughout *Crime and Punishment*<sup>1</sup> it is Raskolnikov's unconscious that accuses him and urges him to repent. His logical conscious mind cannot find anything to be ashamed of in his crime. Stavrogin, in *The Possessed*, punishes himself savagely, and is pursued by hallucinations, but cannot repent. Trofimovitch, in the same novel, is a study of adult infantilism. Dostoevski examines a great many instances of dramatised inner conflict, but—an important point—his interest is artistic rather than clinical. He is a mystic, not a medical realist: and his intuition led him from the particular instance to see the truth it symbolised.

He had many fellow students. Goncharov's novel, *Oblomov*,<sup>2</sup> traced the gradual development of neurosis. The chief character of *The Little Demon*, by Sologub, the schoolmaster Peredonov, is a paranoiac. The characters of Tchekhov are held in a vice by the disharmony between their inner and outer selves. They feel themselves ready for love, for sympathy, for action, but when the opportunity comes they are helpless, and cannot understand why. Either they relapse into frustration, or, like the hero of *The Black Monk*, drape an embroidered fantasy about themselves and leave the outer world—if, indeed, the world does not force a fantasy on them and shut them away, as happens to the luckless doctor in *Ward No. 6*. Some touch of this interest in problems of the unconscious, in mental abnormality, not so much for its own sake as for what may lie behind it, can be found even in the least introverted of Russian novelists. The sunny-tempered Korolenko looks at it in *Makar's Dream*, the story-teller Kuprin in *Garrison Stories*. The introspective streak in the Russian character attunes its ear to messages from the unconscious mind.

<sup>1</sup> 1866.

<sup>2</sup> 1859.

"The poets and philosophers before me discovered the unconscious: what I discovered was the scientific method by which the unconscious can be studied."

Freud, cit. Trilling, *Horizon*, Sept. 1947.

After Freud's theories had reached the layman—and Joyce, whose memory can be trusted, shows that they were being talked about in Dublin by 1904—there was a great liberation of unconscious material in writing. Strindberg had laid down that the only fiction worth while is that which deals unreservedly with the author's own self. He was followed in France by Proust, who in November 1913 told an interviewer from *Le Temps* that *Du Côté de chez Swann* was the first of "a series of novels about the unconscious", and in England by Dorothy Richardson, whose *Pointed Roofs* appeared in 1915. Her Miriam is less a character, in the hitherto accepted sense, than a subjective consciousness; the inner and outer ring described by Dallas, with a continual traffic between the two, and only a misty boundary wavering and dancing like light<sup>1</sup> reflected from water. She is a recorder of the unconscious mind in all its strength and crudity, and to present it she uses what has been called the "stream of consciousness" method—compare the *cinéma intérieur* of Bergson—which Virginia Woolf was to refine and carry to its logical conclusion in *The Waves*.<sup>2</sup> It will be proper to consider this method in a discussion of Joyce's technique, but the phrase "stream of consciousness" is open to misunderstanding. The picture of a stream is clear enough in its sense of continuity, but its importance here is that between the banks of the containing personality it flows from dark to light, from light to dark, without

<sup>1</sup> It is difficult to think of the work of Dorothy Richardson without some image to do with light rising to one's mind: cf. the experience of light in *Pointed Roofs*, recalling that of Kirillov in *The Possessed*, where it is the prelude to an epileptic seizure: an overpowering ecstasy of illumination.

<sup>2</sup> With the essential difference that her approach is that of a poet, her concern to show different facets of consciousness, rather than to investigate exhaustively a single soul.

fixed boundaries, recalling Coleridge's "flux and reflux", Dallas's "tide", the ancient symbolism of fire, air, water, and earth, and so carries more than a hint for the symbolism of *Anna Livia Plurabelle*.

If this seems vague, it must be remembered that in all these things we are on the edge of a mystery. We shall often be unable to define, but only to describe, or, better still, to suggest: and a moment of experience is worth all the definitions and descriptions put together. That is why the novelists have so often been the best psychologists.<sup>1</sup> Their task is to feel, to understand, and to present: to concentrate on the particular instance with such power and honesty that the reader's imagination leaps, in terms of the truth presented, to the truth beyond it. The scientific psychologist must classify and explain: and every explanation leaves a host of casualties on the fields of imagination and feeling, casualties which represent a failure as real as the successes of the explanation in its own field.

Joyce had finished *A Portrait of the Artist* some time before the appearance of *Du Côté de chez Swann* and *Pointed Roofs*, and had begun *Ulysses* in 1914, the year between the two. While both, therefore, were available to him, it is unlikely that he got any of his ideas from them.<sup>2</sup>

## 5

Of Joyce's contact with formal psychological theories of the unconscious we have little more than internal evidence. Though he makes in *Ulysses* a passing, and, in its context, slighting reference to Freud—" . . . the new Viennese school Mr. Magee spoke of"—he uses the Freudian technique of free association on a grand scale. Of Jung I can find little direct mention.<sup>3</sup> Mr.

<sup>1</sup> I received only the other day a letter from a psychiatrist, complaining of this, and of the fact that he had often to go to novels for clues to the understanding of his patients.

<sup>2</sup> I am omitting from this survey writers whose sole contribution was to Joyce's verbal technique.

<sup>3</sup> p. 460, l. 29 Everyday, precious, while m'm'ry's leaves are falling deeply on my Jungfraud's Messongebook I will dream telepath posts dulcets on this isinglass stream.

Gorman records that a patron recommended Joyce to be analysed by Jung, and that he indignantly rejected the suggestion. It is easy to see why: the pattern of his life and work was clear to him, he dared not risk any disturbance of it: his arrogant, almost morbid sense of privacy, his resistance to scrutiny and intrusion, were no accident of character, but a necessary protection for the inner workings of his mind. In any case, a man who could plunge repeatedly into the waters of his own unconscious and come up with pearls in either hand, as Joyce did, needed no help, even from the man who might have understood him better than any other. Of Jung's theory, however, Joyce's work betrays a deep and sympathetic understanding. It was not for nothing that his destiny brought him to Zürich.

Earwicker's dream, as has been pointed out, goes far beyond the limits of his personal unconscious into a wider range of experience resembling the collective unconscious of Jung. The archetypes, the handling of myth, much of the symbolism could have come straight out of Jung (whose four main types chime in with the four old men)<sup>1</sup>: and, though we must move very cautiously here, since the story buried in *Finnegans Wake* is in many places still obscure, the relation of Earwicker's dreams to what we can conjecture of his waking life passes the bounds of Freudian theory in showing, not only his repressed sexual desires, which are plain to read, but his attitude towards his current problems. I would risk saying that Joyce uses dream as a symbolic statement of man's present predicament more often than as a wish fulfilment or other outburst of repressed *libido*, and that in this he is nearer to Jung than to Freud. Even so, the disciples of neither can attach him. Like all the great original writers, Joyce takes what he needs, from whatever source. The incest dreams, the camouflage which seeks to hide their nakedness, the symbolism of the Hill of Howth at the mouth of the river Liffey, the transmutation of Earwicker's initials into *Haveth Childers Everywhere*, will be proudly recognised and claimed by the Freudian. What emerges clearly is that Joyce knew plenty about both systems, took from them what he wanted, and put it to his own use: and that those systems are not sudden and isolated

<sup>1</sup> Tarpey, Lyons, Gregory, and MacDougall.



discoveries, but draw their strength from many sources reaching far back into the past, sources many of which the founders of the systems need not have known. Knowledge emerges by its own force. The water seeks its way under the ground, a trickle escaping here and there, till at last the stream gushes out in power at the place where a lucky man has been allowed to tap the rock and make an opening.

*p. 394, l. 29 . . . orhowwhen theeuponthus (chchch!) cysolt of binoculises memostinmust egotum sabcunsciously senses upers the deprofundity of multimathematical immaterialites wherebejubers in the pancosmic urge the allimmanence of that which Itself is Itself Alone (hear, O hear, Caller Errin!) exteriorises on this ourherenow plane in disunited solod, likeward and gushious bodies with (science, say!) perilwhitened passionpanting pugnoplangent intuitions of reunited selfdom (murky whey, abstrew adim!) in the higherdim-missional selfless Allself, theemeeng Narst meetheeng Idoless, and telling . . .*

*p. 337, l. 6 . . . what matter what all his freudzay . . .*

*p. 411, l. 35 You never made a more freudful mistake, excuse yourself!*

*p. 522, l. 29 You have homosexual catheis of empathy between narcissism of the expert and steatopygic invertedness. Get yourself psychoanalysed.*

I do not wish to labour points that have become obvious; but there is still a great deal of resistance to the idea that Joyce was in the romantic or indeed in any tradition—Joyce's own comments helped to strengthen it; and an even greater resistance, in orthodox circles, to the application to literature of criteria established in psychological enquiry; and, greatest of all, a resistance to the idea of Joyce as a religious writer.

That Joyce's method is romantic was perceived by a hostile critic, Wyndham Lewis. In an interview published in *Everyman*, March 19, 1931, he so classifies it, and comments on the dangers of the thought-stream method, which

“robs work of all linear properties whatever, of all contour and definition . . . The romantic abdominal *within* method results in a jellyfish structure, without articulation of any sort.”

Virginia Woolf linked him with Coleridge's statement about "inmost modes of being" when she says that Joyce

"... is concerned at all costs to reveal the flickerings of that innermost flame which flashes its messages through the brain..."<sup>1</sup>

"Mr. Joyce is a traditionalist," observed Thomas McGreevy,<sup>2</sup> adding sarcastically, "that is why he is regarded as revolutionary by academic critics." Almost all critics emphasised the subjective element in *Finnegans Wake*, F. R. Leavis complaining that its organisation was "external and mechanical". Lionel Trilling,<sup>3</sup> with his accustomed clarity, notes

"... the perception which is to be the common characteristic of both Freud and Romanticism, the perception of the hidden element of human nature and of the opposition between the hidden and the visible..."

and goes on,

"James Joyce, with his interest in the numerous states of receding consciousness, with his use of words as things and of words which point to more than one thing, with his pervading sense of the interrelations and interpenetration of all things, and, not least important, his treatment of familiar themes, has perhaps most thoroughly and consciously exploited Freud's ideas."<sup>4</sup>

For *Finnegans Wake*, however, the primary influence lay at the back of Joyce's mind and was suddenly brought to life. The thinker who enabled him to make his synthesis of all this material was not a twentieth-century psychologist but an eighteenth-century philosopher. Giambattista Vico, a native of Naples, whose work Joyce had studied in Trieste, held a theory that human history progressed in cycles, each of which followed the same course. The first move in a civilisation began when man, terrified by the forces of nature, invented and worshipped gods in order to placate them. Next, he made up myths about

<sup>1</sup> *The Common Reader*.

<sup>2</sup> *Transition*, Fall, 1928.

<sup>3</sup> *Horizon*, Sept. 1947.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

demi-gods and heroes, and arrived at the idea of kingship. Finally, from kingship he came to democracy, which degenerated into chaos; after which the next cycle started, and the process was repeated. This theory, which had slumbered at the back of Joyce's mind,<sup>1</sup> suddenly glowed and flamed. Here was the idea for the new book's structure. Here was the starting point from which to approach the tremendous problem of making manifest the workings of the mind in sleep. For Vico's theory, properly applied, meant that, if all cycles of civilisation were alike, any one was the type of all. To concentrate upon one, to know it fully, was to be made free of all. The myth of one was the myth of all, the heroes were equivalent and interchangeable, the creed of the Romantics had found its philosophical embodiment, and, greatest of all freedoms for the creative artist, the theory entitled him to make his own myth of the present, to symbolise on a gigantic and universal scale the associations and complexes of his own unconscious mind, in the knowledge that they would fit triumphantly into the pattern of human history.

Pattern: that was what Joyce most needed. The world of dream is as vast and formless as the chaos out of which Vico's cycles rise and into which they finally collapse. The framework of the *Odyssey*, spiritually appropriate, if arbitrary, held together the swarming content of *Ulysses* and enabled each part and episode to be pigeonholed in its appropriate place. The far looser framework offered by Vico, an idea instead of a story, its nexus not episode but free association under three broad headings, enabled Joyce to organise Earwicker's dream experiences into something approaching order. It is possible that his success in fitting Dublin into the framework of the *Odyssey* tempted him, in retrospect, to look on *Ulysses* and the *Odyssey* as corresponding cycles of experience. He may have been inclined to forget that he had made one correspond to the other, and regarded the correspondence as inherent in the Dublin material, a view which would make Vico's theory all the more attractive to him.

<sup>1</sup> He had a direct association for it, the Vico Road at Dalkey, which starts at Sorrento and runs along the side of Killiney Bay. "The Vico road goes round and round to meet where terms begin."

In any case, there is no doubt that he had the solution pat to his hand. The Liffey, personified as *Anna Livia*, was not only all rivers at all times, but the water of the unconscious mind,<sup>1</sup> the water from which all life emerged in the creation, the water of the womb, the woman principle, the stream of time on its way to the formless timeless ocean, yet never for an instant losing its local precise identity as the Liffey flowing into Dublin Bay. "Them four old codgers" with their Dublin names, could be the four apostles, the four green fields (provinces) of Ireland, the Four Courts of Dublin, the Four Waves of Irish mythology, Blake's Four Zoas, Jung's four types, four trees on the Liffey bank, commenting on her goings-on—and, when she is in Earwicker's dream, sniggering in senile glee over his goings-on; four points of the compass, four bed-posts:<sup>2</sup> Earwicker himself could out-range his own narrow boundaries, be anyone whom his personal unconscious chose, then escape into the collective unconscious and inherit the whole range of human experience through all ages. What is more, the language which was to record these spreading concentric rings upon the water—the moving water of the stream, that would not let them be static circles, but made the watery graph a spiral and so gave to history the moral significance which Joyce needed, the significance he could not find in the history books<sup>3</sup>—this language had a like freedom. If the unconscious is to range up and down time, the language that records its journeyings must not be anchored to one place or time, but must be free to discover and build from its own associations, must have all the riches which the extended mind of its creator can give to it: his mind which, as Dallas pointed out, never lets anything go: his mind which, a fading coal, can be at all places in his life at once: the associations of this mind make "the prism of a language manycoloured and richly storied" in which we shall see not only the local label, but the

<sup>1</sup> "Water is the commonest symbol of the unconscious"—Jung.

<sup>2</sup> Matthew, Mark, Luke and John,  
Bless the bed that I lie on . . .

<sup>3</sup> "History is a nightmare from which I am trying to awake." Mr. Gilbert thinks this dictum (from *Ulysses*) may have been at the back of Joyce's mind when he fixed on the title *Finnegans Wake*.

timeless essence of the thing itself. From this reservoir, into which every writer, speaker, and singer he had ever encountered had poured his contribution, Joyce, attended by the ghosts of Shakespeare, Swift, and Blake, with Freud and Jung standing by, dipped his bucket for sixteen working years, secure in a magic that made each bucketful a type of the whole, that made Dublin lingo associate with every language he could reach, a starting point from which the unconscious mind could travel everywhere and make a speech that is not only new, but a new Myth. For the way to be free of time and place is to concentrate on the here-and-now. The way to reach the universal is to concentrate upon the particular.

This was Joyce's creed and aim for *Finnegans Wake*, wherein he set himself a task no writer had before attempted.

p. 114, l. 7 . . . these ruled barriers along which the traced words, run march, halt, walk, stumble at doubtful points, stumble up again in comparative safety seem to have been drawn first of all in a pretty checker with lampblack and blackthorn . . .

p. 292, l. 16 . . . What a jetsam litterage of convolvuli of times lost or strayed, of lands derelict and of tongues laggin too, longa yamsayore, not only that but, search lighting, beached, bashed and beauselled à la Mer pharahead into faturity . . .

p. 482, l. 29 He is cured by faith who is sick of fate. The prouts who will invent a writing there ultimately is the poeta, still more learned, who discovered the raiding there originally. That's the point of eschatology our book of kills reaches for now in soandso many counter-point words. What can't be coded can be decoded if an ear aye sieze what no eye ere grieved for . . .

There is the clue. It is the ear that seizes the meaning, rather than the eye. Joyce's eyes failed him, his ear never. He sang; and those who wish to understand that innermost song must listen to it.

## CHAPTER VII

**T**O free narrative from the restrictions of time is an experiment which the early years of this century made inevitable. In effect, it could only mean to free narrative from conventional ideas about time, and adjust it to newer ideas: a process depending less on intellectual understanding of these new ideas than on their assimilation into deeper layers of consciousness. Just as those who have been born into the age of radio and the aeroplane master the details of these things with far greater ease than those who have had to meet them in maturity, so the spirit of the age predisposes a new generation to accept without difficulty ideas of time and space and matter which seem paradoxical to their elders. This is a platitude, but the history of the novel heavily underlines it.

The older fiction depended upon a view of man's life in time which was held unchallenged for centuries. Man was pictured as an insect crawling in a straight line along a track from birth to death. Upon the track, as upon a ruler, were marked the years, and one had merely to glance at the ruler to see where the insect had got to. During the last century, philosophical difficulties inherent in this picture suggested a modification of it. Instead of looking on man as the insect, a new school of thought looked on him as the track. The track was man extended in time, a long, thin rod. By cutting it at any given year, five, twenty-five, forty, sixty-five, one obtained a cross-section showing the man as he was at that point in his journey. This view had a great advantage over the former, because it took into consideration the different stages of the man's development and character, whereas, in the former picture, he remained the same, without continuity. One had to imagine his development. The cross-section, on the other hand, showed it graphically.

This view led naturally to others. The one that concerns our present enquiry can be suggested, non-technically, by

another picture. A stretch of coastline lies opposite us in darkness. The beam of a searchlight moves along it, illuminating a small circle only. The spot illumined by the searchlight we call "now". This spot, this tiny section of the long coast, is all we can see. The miles of coast along which the spot of light has moved, invisible to us now except in memory, we call "the past". The miles which it has not yet reached we call "the future". We can see only the small illumined circle: but, does that mean that the rest of the coast is not there, "all the time"?

Obviously, once these pictures have been admitted and domesticated by man's imagination, their influence must sooner or later work upon the novel.

## 2

The traditional way of telling a story can be symbolised by a car travelling along a road (a picture more appropriate to this century than that of an insect on a ruler), passing a number of objects in a definite order. We begin at the beginning, and go straight on to the end. Even if there are several strands of interest, we need only widen the road and have parallel lines of traffic, some fast, some slow, but all travelling in the same direction. If the author wants a flash-back, it means only that this or that car is shown upon a previous stretch of the same road. All the cars, whatever their speed, will pass the objects by the roadside in the same order. They will pass landmarks A and B before they come to C.

But some of the newer novelists, whose work preceded the publication of *Finnegans Wake*, approached their subject in a different way. One produced a novel which might be represented as a field, in which the chief event or feature stood up like a stone post, against which, every now and then, cows came to rub themselves. Another made a book like an orange, full of segments, all related to a centre but independent in time. The story was not complete until one had devoured every segment, but it did not much matter where one began. The book was a circular pattern.

In a word, the reader was confronted with stories in which the sequence of events as presented to him was not that in which they would have occurred "in real life", or in a story conventionally timed. We may not go further than that, because we are not entitled to suppose that the author imagined his story otherwise than as he wrote it. At any rate, the reader, reared on the traditional novel, and accustomed for his own convenience to sort out the events and arrange them in the logical, from-left-to-right-on-the-page time sequence which his mind demands, could in some cases find that this sorting was unimportant, if not actually a hindrance, to his understanding of the new work.

For example, one of the best-known novels of Mr. William Faulkner, *The Sound and the Fury*, is written in four sections. The first, dated April 7th, 1928, consists of the timeless interior monologue of an imbecile, in which dimly appear other characters and events connected with them. The second section, dated June 1910, shows another facet of the same characters and events. The third, dated April 6th, 1928, a day before the first, reveals still more of the pattern: but not until the last, dated April 8th, 1928, a day after the first, does the whole pattern appear.

In another of Mr. Faulkner's novels, *Sanctuary*, the central incident (of a kind more often found in case-books than in fiction) is not disclosed till near the end of the book. We suspect it, or something like it, from the conversation and behaviour of the characters. Were the story rearranged in the traditional time sequence, it would occur quite early: but the peculiar effect of the book is gained by approaching it out of the logical from-left-to-right time sequence. This method is quite different from the saving-it-up-till-the-end method of the detective story. There, we know what has happened—the banker has been stabbed in the library—but we do not know who has done it. Here, we do not know what has happened, though we do know what characters are involved. We know who has done it, but not what has been done.

Another American novelist, Mr. John dos Passos, has used the novel to build up a composite picture of a city or a civilisation,



making use of dozens of cross-sections, portraits of individuals, newspaper headlines, "flashes", etc., often very casually related in time. Mr. Arthur Calder Marshall's *Dead Centre* is an example of the "orange" technique. A picture of a school, its numerous segments, boys, masters, matron, housemaids, etc., add up to make a circular pattern which does not depend to any marked degree upon a from-left-to-right time sequence. Mr. Aldous Huxley's *Eyeless in Gaza* aims at a new kind of suspense, to be achieved by revealing the events in a different sequence from that in which they "really" occurred. We often know, in reading it, what must have happened, but not the how or why.

Very many examples could be adduced, but it will be more profitable to go straight on to Joyce, whose departures from the traditional time sequence were far more drastic and far-reaching. One of the qualities which mark Joyce off from his contemporaries is the ruthless logic with which he follows an idea to its conclusion. If a novelist is to free himself from the conventional time sequence in the construction of his story, must he not use the same freedom in the writing? Will it not apply to each chapter, each paragraph, to the language itself? May not the reader be asked to contemplate a page the meaning of which does not depend on the from-left-to-right sequence he has learned to expect since childhood? We have learned to begin at the top left-hand corner, cross the page to the right along the first line, and so on all the way down. Is this essential?

Before we exclaim indignantly that the question is mad, let us consider it for a moment. It is all a matter of what we may call the unit of understanding. With a very small child, this is one word only: "Mama", "Nana", "Dada". Soon, however, we learn to extend this, and can by a single act of understanding take in the meaning of three or four words, without depending on their order. "Limping little pink-eyed spotted dog" will convey a single impression, which **will** not be weakened if the adjectives are arranged in a different order.

A practised professional reader learns to assimilate meaning in far larger units. A reader familiar with German, in which the order of words in a sentence differs markedly from the English

order, is depending far less upon the from-left-to-right order. If expert in Latin, where the order is far more arbitrary than in either German or English; where, as a rule, order is the last thing at which one looks in order to arrive at the meaning of a sentence; he will find himself habitually receiving meanings without pausing consciously to rearrange the words in from-left-to-right sequence on the page. He has learned to take word-blocks of various lengths as his unit, and has won a considerable degree of freedom from the order in which the words are arranged: or, had we better say, from the order which once seemed to be the only sane, natural order, from left to right across the page?

The question, then, whether this from-left-to-right order is essential, does not seem quite so mad as it did at first. We have to unlearn something, and this is never easy; but most of us have, without realising it, taken the first steps already. It is well we have, for Joyce, who is entirely merciless in his demands upon the reader—he said expressly that a whole lifetime was necessary in order to understand his work<sup>1</sup>—requires us to extend our capacity for receiving word-blocks to a degree which will enable us to comprehend a far larger unit, the paragraph. If the novelist may apply the orange or post-in-a-field technique to his whole book, he may go further and apply it to the single paragraph, delivering what he has to say by an aggregate of images, which, like the shorter aggregates of noun and adjectives we have been considering, does not depend for its total meaning upon the order in which its component images are arranged.

Obviously, no reader can take in, by a single act of understanding, the whole of a long paragraph. What he can do is to suspend his effort to make sense of it until he has reached the end. Instead of saying to himself, *seriatim*, “Now what exactly does that mean?” as he passes from image to image in left-to-right order upon the page, let him receive the images at their face value, and then, at the end, see what effect the para-

<sup>1</sup> This, to paraphrase Lady Bracknell, is not the destiny I propose for myself, much less for the reader. My aim is to reach a position from which such study as we propose to give to Joyce may be best directed.

graph as a whole has left upon his mind. With *Finnegans Wake*, several such unanalytical readings of a paragraph will be necessary to get a general effect: and it will be all to the good if the paragraph is read aloud. In other words, we must *listen*. Joyce is the most difficult of novelists, but he is consistent. He is, as we have seen, always a singer. Our clue is music.

When he listens to an orchestra, the average listener is not at pains to analyse intellectually each sound or series of sounds as he hears it. Instead of saying to himself, "Now what was he getting at with that entry for the oboes?" and "What is the exact significance of that ascending figure for the 'cellos?" he listens, and allows the movement or the symphony to make its effect upon him. He does this the more readily because music is an abstract language, with a direct appeal to the emotions. What it has to say to most of us is not filtered through the intellect. It speaks to the unconscious in us, to our deeper levels. We do not get very far with attempts to paraphrase its message. For these reasons, we are comparatively docile before it. We are prepared to listen passively, to be receptive, to allow the music to have an effect on us, before we try to analyse that effect. But because literature consists of words, because both prose and poetry are obliged to get their effects from combinations of the labels of things in the material world, labels which have local associations for us, we are apt to start upon them immediately with our intellect, and, by snatching at their local associations, by tearing out piecemeal meanings, to destroy our chance of receiving the deeper meaning which comes from the combination of words. We are attempting to understand along the infantile lines of very small units of comprehension, and prejudicing our chances still further by plucking them out of their emotional context.

Many of the persons who thus prematurely try to analyse works of literature, and particularly verse, pride themselves upon being scientific: but it is hardly scientific to analyse the effect of a work before giving it a chance to have any effect at all. We must learn to listen: to relax, and let the music or the poetry or the rhythmic passage reach that part of us where alone it can speak its message. Many people who have heard the gramophone

record of Joyce reading the final passage of *Anna Livia Plurabelle* testify to the better understanding which it has given them. Joyce was writing about the unconscious, and his message is to the unconscious. Consciousness has its part to play in the reading, as it had in the writing; but, for the reader at any rate, it cannot profitably play that part until the unconscious has been given a flying start.

Here, too, we are up against a further difficulty, obvious once it is pointed out to us, but which a surprisingly large number of readers do not appear to realise. Just as a single note in a musical composition, or in a phrase, derives its unique quality from its context, its key, its relation to the notes before and after it, and so cannot be isolated without losing that quality: in the same way, one cannot arrive at the significance of a word-in-its-context by isolating it from that context. Any attempt to explain the magical power of a single word in a poem by taking the word out, looking it up in the dictionary, deriving it, and so forth, is bound to fail.

Whatever else we may learn about the word, the one thing we will not explain is its effect in the place where the poet put it. The word out of its context is not the same word as the word-in-its-context. The poem—or paragraph, or sentence, or phrase—is a *gestalt*, a whole, which cannot be broken up and analysed fragment by fragment.

This point will be clearer when we come to examine a few typical sentences from *Finnegans Wake*. For the moment, let us return to the abandonment of the from-left-to-right time sequence. This to most readers is the chief stumbling-block, since it asks them to suspend a habit of thought, and so seems the end of sanity and order. Let us change the analogy<sup>1</sup> from music to painting. On the wall of a picture gallery is a large canvas containing a number of figures and a great amount of detail. We stand first of all at a distance, and receive the effect of the composition as a whole. Then we come close, and begin to examine the detail—not in from-left-to-right sequence, starting

<sup>1</sup> An analogy only, not in any sense a comparison. As a comparison it would be heroically inept, for *Finnegans Wake* is the least visual of Joyce's works. It is almost altogether for the ear.

at the top left-hand corner and crossing the canvas in a series of linear glances, but in any order that suits us. Finally, we step back, and once more take in the whole picture.

Whatever degree of understanding we achieve, it will not have depended on the order in which we inspected the various figures and details. Nor need it with a paragraph or section of *Finnegans Wake*. Obviously, because of the limitation of print, Joyce has been obliged to arrange his images in left-to-right order on the page—though in many places, by the addition of simultaneous footnotes, and in the fragment printed separately under the title *Storiella As She Is Syung*,<sup>1</sup> of marginal notes dotted in odd places about the page, cabalistic signs, and whatnot, he has done all he can to dodge it. We can think two or three things at once (some of us), but we cannot satisfactorily print them, or make them heard, except by getting several voices to speak them simultaneously—not a very satisfactory device.

I should add that while I am convinced that Joyce has abandoned the normal time sequence in his paragraphs, I have no authority to assert it positively. I put forward the theory in an essay published in 1932.<sup>2</sup> A friend who knew him well told me that he had questioned Joyce about the essay, and that Joyce had read it, and expressed pleasure at it. That is anything but positive evidence. The theory is supported, however, by a fact related by Mr. Frank Budgen, whose book<sup>3</sup> I did not read until 1943. Mr. Budgen says that Joyce, when making notes for a paragraph or section, would rotate the paper between each, so that the notes appeared on the page in what looked like chaos. This would hardly be explicable unless Joyce was at pains to avoid the traditional time-relationship between them. The writer who had decided to free himself from the restrictions of time, who was aware of the freedoms already being enjoyed by his colleagues, who understood as well as anybody what was involved by the new physics, who could not fail to see that every association implied a jump from one point of time to another,

<sup>1</sup> Printed at the Corvinus Press, by the late Viscount Carlow.

<sup>2</sup> *The English Novelists*, ed. Derek Verschoyle.

<sup>3</sup> *James Joyce and the Making of Ulysses*.

if not to several, and that all those points were united simultaneously in the word or phrase that made the jump; the writer who constructed a new language in order to develop such jumping to a pitch that enabled his narrative to be everywhere in time, and therefore free from its limitations; this writer was not likely to exempt the units of his narrative, the paragraphs, the word-blocks, from the process he applied to the story which those units told, and to the words of which they were built. So, although we must *hear* the images in from-left-to-right order, the effort needed to apprehend them calls for so many moves in so many directions of time that our final understanding does not depend upon their order on the printed page, and is often hindered by any attempt to keep them in that order—at any rate, before they have been given ample opportunity to make their appeal to our subconscious mind, which is very little interested in from-left-to-right order. We do not dream in from-left-to-right order. We dream several things at once. It is only when we come to remember and relate our dreams that we laboriously impose the left-to-right sequence upon them, aware often of our difficulty, and protesting that one aspect of the dream was not before another, but that we were aware of both at once. Mr. J. W. Dunne, who exhibits no great tenderness towards the unconscious, suggests that dreaming is a multi-dimensional activity, and that a great part of our difficulties in dream experience arises from the attempt to apply to it the three dimensions of waking life.<sup>1</sup> Not to go so far afield, we can at any time try the experiment, when a woman is in a brown study, of asking her what she is thinking about. Often she will reply, “Of several things at once!”: and though she is obliged to tell them one after another, and there may be some significance in the order she selects, she quite clearly has to make an effort to sort them out, because they were all simultaneously before her mind when our question took her unawares.

An even simpler illustration is provided in the cinema theatre by the title-page of a certain popular newsreel. In this one sees a great number of things going on at once and rapidly dissolving into others. Cars race, troops march, the King and Queen bow

<sup>1</sup> *An Experiment With Time and The Serial Universe.*

from their coach, athletes race, boxers spar, and so forth. We see several of these things happening at once: but, if called upon to tell what we see, we are obliged to mention them one by one, in an order decided (probably) by the degree of our interest in them.

This was the heart of Joyce's problem. What was seen as a whole had to be related piecemeal and in a certain order. His method and practice show that he was perfectly well aware of this, and was continually at pains to leave his multi-dimensional material as little disturbed as possible by its necessary translation to the two-dimensional page.

### 3

Long after I had reached this conclusion, I came across an anticipation of it, written by Mr. Robert Sage, in the Fall, 1928, number of *Transition*:

Just as the symbols of arithmetic are no longer adequate when the problem is expressed in terms of algebra, so the ordinary reading attitude is useless as an approach to Joyce. Instead of observing the traditional chronological scheme, with the narrative fibres sharply separated and treated as individual unities, he has telescoped time, space and humanity . . .

The reader must consequently at the outset make a radical mental readjustment. He must be prepared to visualise several related images at once . . . His attitude should be that of a person witnessing a half dozen finely coordinated cinema films being projected together on the same screen while a symphony orchestra expresses the sound complement of the mobile images.

The root of the trouble is that in waking consciousness, as on the printed page, we are obliged to move in one direction only at a time, to go from one point to another; whereas in dream there are no obvious transitions. Either we are in several places at once—"It was on a mountain, yet somehow we were still in the house"—or we have only to think of a place and there we are. Personality is fluid too—"She was like Joan, but all the time I knew she was Olive." We are ourselves, yet someone else. In waking consciousness, we could be one after the other,

not both at once. Only as we approach a dreaming condition do we begin to be free,<sup>1</sup> and escape from time's limitations. It is as if, in dream, we were able to move or be in several directions or places at once—which is, partially at any rate, to be free from the restraints of time and space. Thus the writer who would convey or describe dream activity trips at once over a most formidable obstacle. The medium which he is obliged to use is strictly limited in space, and in the circumstance from which man first formed his waking conception of time, that is, the fact that events follow one another at longer or shorter intervals. The events, in this case words or images, follow one another at varying intervals on the rectangle of paper. This means that the writer's attempt is maimed from the start. How does he recover? How does he get round the obstacle?

If there were a rigid line between dream and waking, if the two sorts of consciousness were wholly unlike and unrelated, he would have no chance at all. Fortunately for him, consciousness has no such sharp dividing lines. We may picture it in strata, like the earth's crust, and talk of deeper layers of consciousness, but its regions shade imperceptibly one into the next. In sleep we tend to fall with quickly accelerated movement, so that, while we are often aware of the early stages of the descent, and feel our thoughts beginning to slide out of control, we soon cease to notice what is happening. But among the earlier stages, the regions just below or beyond normal waking attention, are realms in which we are intensely and concentratedly aware of something, but lose touch with time and space: realms of contemplation, of feeling, wherein we are rapt and experience things with a singular purity. These realms are not reached by directions given to or by the intellect. We reach them indirectly, in response to certain stimuli. Music is one of the strongest stimuli, music and rhythm, combined often with words which increase the power of the incantation: and poets, from Homer onwards, have been skilful in the making of incantations which shall transport us to these realms of consciousness.

<sup>1</sup> "So timeless seemed the grey warm air, so fluid and impersonal his own mood, that all ages were as one to him"—*A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*.



It must be clear by now, if not before, that "the unconscious" is a most unsatisfactory term. Consciousness is continuous, and can at no stage suddenly become the opposite of itself. As there are infinite gradations of light from the most dazzling stellar incandescence through daylight, dusk, and what we call darkness (but cats and night-fighter-pilots can see in it), to the ultimate zero of no light at all, so consciousness is graded, and nobody can say where it ends. Subsequent hypnosis has proved that patients in deep anæsthesia were conscious even of what was going on in the operating theatre, when heaven knows what other realms their mind was traversing. Dallas was right. What the mind seizes it never lets go! and it seizes a great deal more than it is consciously aware of seizing. There are different levels of consciousness, different realms, different kinds if you like, and the unconscious is a clumsy term for all levels below the surface, all levels where the hold and validity of surface time and space are weakened progressively as we go deeper. *Finnegans Wake* explores several of these levels, using, in addition to the special devices we have been discussing, the time-honoured methods of incantation, music, rhythm, and suggestion, for which Joyce's gifts and interests especially qualified him.

4

Let us now take an example. Most readers are introduced to *Finnegans Wake* through the fragment called *Anna Livia Plurabelle*, which was published separately some years before the whole book appeared. From a few straightforward sentences, scattered here and there—"Throw the cobwebs from your eyes, woman, and spread your washing proper"—we gather that some old women are washing their clothes in the Liffey. By a dreamy, rhythmic movement, a gradual whispering of blurred pictures, pierced here and there with a clear point of light like a star in the evening sky, a scene, a mood is evoked, elusive, without sharp detail, a glimmer of summer twilight, perceived by a dreaming mind that is at once a tree on the bank, a stone, an old woman talking to herself and to others, the river flowing by, the sky that floats reflected in the river, and all that rivers and stones and old

women have ever meant to man since time began. The appeal is not to the waking mind, but to the mind in dream, on the contemplative level, to which it is brought by a series of gentle, inadequate calls to the blurred senses. No image is so sharp as to project from the silvery twilight. Each makes its faint tinkling impact, and is gone, fading back into the dream, into the music of the soft crepuscular incantation.

. . . Subdue your noise, you hamble creature! What is it but a blackburry growth or the dwyergray ass them four old codgers owns. Are you meanam Tarpey and Lyons and Gregory? I meyne now, thank all, the four of them, and the roar of them, that draves that stray in the mist and old Johnny MacDougal along with them. Is that the Poolbeg flasher beyant, pharphar, or a fireboat coasting nyar the Kishtna or a glow I behold within a hedge or my Garry come back from the Indes? Wait till the honeying of the lune, love! Die eve, little eve, die! We see that wonder in your eye. We'll meet again, we'll part once more. The spot I'll seek if the hour you'll find. My chart shines high where the blue milk's upset. Forgivemequick, I'm going! Bubyee! And you, pluck your watch, forgetmenot. Your evenlode. So save to jurna's end! My sights are swimming thicker on me by the shadows to this place. I sow home slowly now by own way, moyvalley way. Towy I too, rathmine.

Ah, but she was the queer old skeowsha anyhow, Anna Livia, trinkettoes! And sure he was the quare old buntz too, Dear Dirty Dumpling, foostherfather of fingalls and dotthergills. Gammer and gaffer we're all their gangsters. Hadn't he seven dams to wive him? And every dam had her seven crutches. And every crutch had its seven hues. And each hue had a differing cry. Sudds for me and supper for you and the doctor's bill for Joe John. Befor! Bifur! He married his markets, cheap by foul, I know, like any Etrurian Catholic Heathen, in their pinky limony creamy birnies and their turkiss indienne mauves. But at milkidmass who was the spouse? Then all that was was fair. Tys Elvenland! Teems of times and happy returns. The seim anew. Ordovico or viricordo. Anna was, Livia is, Plurabelle's to be. Northmen's thing made southfolk's place but howmulty plurators made eachone in person? Latin me that, my trinity scholar, out of eure sanscreed into oure erylant. *Hircus Civis Eblanensis!* He had buckgoat paps on him, soft ones for orphans. Ho, Lord! Twins of his bosom. Lord save us! And

ho! Hey? What all men. Hot? His tittering daughters of Whawk?

Can't hear with the waters of. The chittering waters of. Flittering bats, fieldmice bawk talk. Ho! Are you not gone ahome? What Tom Malone? Can't hear with bawk of bats, all thim liffeying waters of. Ho, talk save us! My foos won't moos. I feel as old as yonder elm. A tale told of Shaun or Shem? All Livia's daughter-sons. Dark hawks hear us. Night! Night! My ho head halls. I feel as heavy as yonder stone. Tell me of John or Shaun? Who were Shem and Shaun the living sons or daughters of? Night now! Tell me, tell me, tell me, elm! Night night! Telmetale of stem or stone. Beside the rivering waters of, hitherandthithering waters of. Night!

The fact that this was the first section to be published shows how high are Joyce's demands on the reader. Though it is one of the most straightforward parts of the book, it offers a number of serious difficulties. Was the reader to make much of Tarpey and Lyons and Gregory and old Johnny MacDougal, thus introduced for the first time? "Is that the Poolbeg flasher beyant, pharphar?" He may get the idea from "flasher" if he knows that *pharos* means a lighthouse, but it is a little hard if he does not know—as how should he?—that the Poolbeg is a Dublin Bay lightship. "Teens of times and happy returns. The seim anew" in conjunction with "Ordovico" may give him something, but hardly unless he had heard of Vico and Joyce's interest in his philosophy. A smattering of Church history, and names of languages, may suggest to him some of the associations in "Latin me that, my trinity scholard, out of eure sanscreed into oure eryan". He will not find difficulty in accepting the sound-suggestions of the last paragraph, but he will almost certainly be left wondering what the section is all about, and why that last paragraph is preceded by the one before. In his perplexity, he will probably concentrate on the feature that seems to offer most promise, the language, the word amalgams. The temptation to pull them to bits is strong. Here is something with which waking consciousness can happily busy itself. I have, I hope, made clear that this should not be its first concern. But, clearly, the language must be studied.

There is, theoretically, a good case for it. If we accept Joyce's premiss that language must suit the activity which it describes—as exemplified in the scene in the lying-in hospital in *Ulysses*—then the language which describes dream-like states of consciousness must be the language of dreams. Dreaming is a multidimensional activity, therefore it can only be described by a multi-dimensional language. Night-thinking is not like day-thinking. So to make the language of *Finnegans Wake* have gone all the allusions, the associations, the puns, the cross-correspondences from language to language, from experience to experience, the place-names, the incidents, the mistakes, the memories, everything in the life of everyman, H. C. Earwicker, Here Comes Everybody, Haveth Childers Everywhere, everywhere and at every time; everything, since man's thought first became recognisable, which has brought about that any one object or idea shall join hands with or recall another, or be fused with it into a dream object or idea incomprehensible at first sight to the waking mind.

5

Some years ago I awoke from a dream with two words vividly upstanding before my mind's eye: HIGGERTH MIZZERS. They appeared in print as the headline of a newspaper, persisting after I was awake, and visible with decreasing clarity every time I shut my eyes again. I could make nothing of them. It was not until I had forgotten, and suddenly remembered them again, that I recognised them as an amalgam of two names, plus a memory connected with one of them. The first name was Harry Mizler, a boxer in whose performance I was interested. The second was Mis Tor, a horse I had occasionally backed for sentimental reasons, because Great Mis Tor is the highest peak of Southern Dartmoor, and I have often climbed it. Another name for it is High Mis Tor—both adjectives to distinguish it from Little Mis Tor, close by. A Devonian says "gert" for "great", and would call it Gert Mis Tor. The horse won one of its races (one, at least, while I was backing it) and the

boxer also appeared successfully in headlines. The component parts of HIGGERTH MIZZERS were revealed.

I give this rather ridiculous example because it sheds a contributory light on the vocabulary of *Finnegans Wake*. Dream, affecting its associations far more swiftly than waking thought, does often telescope words and combine them. It links not only the images but their names. Joyce seized on this faculty, and did all that full consciousness could do to develop and complicate it. He had made a start in *A Portrait of the Artist*, he had played extensively with it in *Ulysses*; now he made it his mainstay, leaned his full weight on it. As the images of a dream slide and dissolve into each other, and in all directions, so, according to the principle adumbrated in the opening of *A Portrait of the Artist* and developed in the hospital scene in *Ulysses*, the words which record a dream must slide and dissolve into each other. That they do so far more musically in Earwicker's dreams than in this one of mine is to be credited to Joyce's tenor voice and sense of poetry, and to the very important fact that he laboured over them with his waking consciousness. Some critics have doubted whether there is any truly *unconscious* material in *Finnegans Wake*. I am sure there is a great deal, if only because to read it always makes me dream with unusual richness and garrulity.

6

Now let us examine more closely one or two short extracts from the passage quoted above, to see how the attempt to avoid the from-left-to-right time sequence has worked out in practice. I will take those on which I have already made a comment or two.

"Is that the Poolbeg flasher beyant, pharphar, or a fireboat coasting nyar the Kishtna or a glow I behold within a hedge or my Garry come back from the Indes?"

This sentence is built up on two main ideas, one at the beginning and one at the end. In other words, its centre of gravity, the meeting-place of its associations, is in the middle. They then cross over, and continue. The meaning flows both

ways, from both ends of the sentence, meeting and fusing in the central word "Kishtna", and flowing on past it.

The two ideas are the light (in the lightship) and India. The distant Poolbeg lightship—*pharos*, a lighthouse—the boat carrying the dead body down the Indian river to be burned—also the ordinary Far Eastern term for a steamer—Kish, another Dublin lightship, fusing with Krishna, and the river Kistna—a glow-worm—Garry, who in the refrain of the song "Garryowen" is described as "in glory"—gharry, an Indian cab—India. You can start at either end, and follow the association through: but no single line of progress will give you the whole meaning.

Let us try one more; this one central to the entire theme and structure of the book.

"Teems of times and happy returns. The seim anew. Ordovico or viricordo. Anna was, Livia is, Plurabelle's to be."

Here the centre of gravity, the pivot of the sentence, is Ordovico—the order, the sequence of phases laid down by Giambattista Vico. According to his theory, the same four phases repeat themselves forever throughout human history. No matter how many "teems of times", the same sequence turns up "anew" over and over again: and is repeated in the heart of man, the *cor* of the *vir*, and reflected in his religious observances and ceremonies, so that the river Liffey, Anna Livia Plurabelle, is the type of all rivers that were, and are, and ever shall be. "Anna was, Livia is, Plurabelle's to be"; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be.

The meaning of this sentence expands outwards in both directions from the central word "Ordovico", like rings in a pool after a stone has fallen into it.

Joyce returns many times to this theme, with variations. Both of the following occur four hundred pages after the sentences we have been examining:

p. 614, l. 7 For nought that is has bane. In mournenslaund. Themes have thimes and habit reburns. To flame in you. Ardor vigor forders order. Since ancient was our living is in possible to be.

p. 620, l. 13. Galliver and Gellover. Unless they changes by mistake.  
I seen the likes in the twinnngling of an aye. Som. So oft. Sim.  
Time after time. The sehm asnuh.

“Every work of art,” said Coleridge, “must contain within itself the reason why it is itself and not otherwise.” *Finnegans Wake* would appear to fulfil this condition.

## CHAPTER VIII

So far, this study has not burdened itself with any attempt at a philosophical attitude; but we have now reached a stage where it may be necessary to suggest, if not to formulate, the position from which Joyce's work is being inspected. We have defined the approach, but not the place it starts from. Since the whole purpose of the approach is to establish a harmonious relationship with the work, on however narrow a front, it is important that some attempt be made.

The scientist Lance White,<sup>1</sup> asked point blank if we could be aware of a transcendental pattern in the universe, shied at the word transcendental, and substituted "a pattern not derived from sense-perceptions in space and time". To the question thus qualified he answered "Yes", basing his answer on the fact that whereas phenomena were subject to time and suffered change, natural laws had not changed since mankind first became aware of them. Donald MacKinnon,<sup>2</sup> professor of moral philosophy, said "Yes" to the question in its original form—with the rider that it was difficult to say exactly what we meant by "aware" in this sense.

These replies are a rough-and-ready but not unsuitable introduction to a central problem. Man has long striven to establish the existence of a reality beyond his physical experience. Socrates rejected the equation of knowledge with experience because experience was transient, subject to time, and knowledge must be secure. Berkeley, embracing this difficulty, pointed out that on a certain level our perceptions were the only evidence we had that things existed, since we could not prove that a thing was still there when we could no longer see it. The immense probability that it was still there he explained by saying that it was continuously perceived by God, and its existence was therefore

<sup>1</sup> At a conference at Oxford, August 1948.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*



independent of our occasional perceptions. Belief in the reality of ideas—"thoughts are things"—permeates much of the scientific and philosophic thought of the past fifty years: and there is a corresponding tendency to question the information given to us by our senses. "Sight,"<sup>1</sup> says Bertrand Russell,

... "may, on occasion, be misleading, as in the case of Macbeth's dagger, but touch never.<sup>2</sup> An 'object' is etymologically something thrown up in my way: if I run into a post in the dark, I am persuaded that I perceive an 'object', and do not merely have a self-centred experience. This is the view implied in Dr. Johnson's refutation of Berkeley."

But it is not as simple as that. We have to consider not hallucinated but normal sense-impressions. The same writer, speaking this time for himself, and taking as his example of a real object a book, which we look at and then shut into a drawer, observes:

Unsophisticated common sense supposes that the book, just as it appears when seen, is there all the time. This we know to be false. The book which can exist unseen must, if it exists, be the sort of thing that physics says it is, which is quite unlike what we see. What we more or less know is that if we fulfil certain conditions, we shall see the book. We believe that the causes of this experience lie only partly within ourselves; the causes external to ourselves are what lead us to belief in the book. This requires belief in a kind of cause which completely and essentially transcends experience.

"Completely and essentially transcends experience": I suggest that we hold on to those words, realising that the writer means physical experience, sense perception. This point is important. The German philosopher, Neurath, for instance, goes so far as to deny that we can compare reality with propositions. Assertions are to be compared with assertions, not with experiences.

<sup>1</sup> *An Inquiry into Meaning and Truth.*

<sup>2</sup> This is not true. Each of the senses may be hallucinated, though sight and sound furnish the commonest instances.

If these difficulties beset us in the consideration of physical experience, of "real" objects, it seems we shall be far worse off when we come to consider "pattern", or æsthetic values, or what we are accustomed to call inner experience. Here the subjective element must be very strong, if not predominant, and we may not know where we are. Yet no sooner do we reach this dangerous ground than notes of comfort are sounded. Santayana, no friend to romanticism (in philosophy, at any rate), drawing a picture of a solipsistic dreamer constructing imaginary worlds out of his own mind, admits that truth would not be involved. Such dreams could be neither proved nor disproved. No one could claim truth for them; no one could complain that they were untrue. Truth, for such a dreamer, would be a biography of himself as having dreamed those dreams.<sup>1</sup>

There could, however, be a further test. At some point before his postulated withdrawal from life, the dreamer must have had certain experiences which provided him with the images for his dreams. Provided that such experiences had been deeply felt, provided that his relationship to what he perceived had been a good one, there would be nothing to stop him from "dreaming true". His dreams, based upon impressions received in the past, could be an expression of reality on a particular level. This would be all the more likely if his dreams arose from impressions of beauty and goodness, values which, as we have seen, man is always trying to exalt above the transient phenomena that express them. He makes the attempt with values of every kind.

"Though everything in the panorama of history be temporal, the panorama itself is dateless: for evidently the sum and system of events cannot be one of them."<sup>2</sup>

That is Santayana, speaking of a branch of study which is commonly thought to be less subjective than æsthetics.

<sup>1</sup> *The Realm of Truth.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

Coming now to the realm of æsthetics, where personal opinions differ even more radically than in the assessment of material phenomena, we invoke a philosopher, Dr. W. R. Matthews, to refute that cynical, man-in-the-street statement of the subjective position, "Beauty is in the eye of the beholder." We must refute it, if this enquiry is to continue, since it implies the denial of absolute values, and of the whole fabric of Joyce's work, which is belief in pattern.

"At the moment of æsthetic enjoyment,"<sup>1</sup> temperately comments Dr. Matthews,

the beautiful is apprehended as an objective character in the world contemplated, as much so as the colours and shapes which compose the scene; and our enjoyment would be diminished if at that moment we were convinced that the whole æsthetic value was simply our personal and private interpretation.

It would indeed: and we are coming into line now with the point of view we have been examining in another context. The scientists are prepared to support us, albeit cautiously:

We are no longer required to believe that our response to beauty, and the mystic's sense of communion with God, have no objective counterpart. It may well be that they are what they have so often been taken to be, clues to the nature of reality . . . Thus our various experiences are put on a more equal footing, as it were . . . In this new scientific universe, even mystics may have a right to exist.<sup>2</sup>

That comes from a physicist, J. W. N. Sullivan. More recently, Whitehead has affirmed his faith that the pursuit of beauty, æsthetic and moral, is the aim of life: that quality which the ancient Egyptians called "beauty-goodness". Taking the thought a little further, in the direction of what we have called pattern, Dr. Matthews commits himself with characteristic clarity.

That the process of nature should produce both the beauty which we enjoy and the capacity for its enjoyment is something which needs

<sup>1</sup> *The Purpose of God.*

<sup>2</sup> *Limitations of Science.*

to be explained, and which cannot be accounted for in any theory of evolution which is not teleological.<sup>1</sup>

In other words, any theory which is not based on an idea of purpose and pattern in the universe. We do not need this last idea, of a creative purpose in evolution, for our understanding of Joyce, but we can be assured that he would not have rejected it.

A doctor of my acquaintance, speaking of one of his patients, said simply: "Music, for her, is the chief form which reality takes." The phrase could not be bettered. Substitute if necessary the form of art which is preferred, and the whole position of the artist is summed up: the position of the Romantic movement: a position which has considerable support from philosophy and from science. It is essential to Joyce's work. We could not understand *Finnegans Wake* without it. It is, moreover, a position wholly intelligible to the theologian; for, even though he may differ from the artist as to what is beautiful and good, he agrees with him in looking for ultimate reality in the world of values.

3

"Science," said Lafcadio Hearn, in a passage we have already quoted, "is the destroyer of materialism." A great many scientists would agree with him, if only because, by setting limits to what it is competent to do, science prevents itself from being applied to tasks outside its range. It cannot, for instance, give us any information about values, whether æsthetic or moral. Sir James Jeans points out that science can analyse and describe the structure of a fugue by Bach, but cannot distinguish the musical quality of the fugue from that of any other composition in the same form.<sup>2</sup> According to Sullivan, its function is to describe the structure of things.<sup>3</sup> Its measuring-rod cannot check the quality of a work of art. This statement of science's limitations, made not as an accusation by its enemies, but by scientists themselves as a defence, was necessary among other

<sup>1</sup> *The Purpose of God.*

<sup>2</sup> SIR JAMES JEANS: *Science and Music.*

<sup>3</sup> J. W. N. SULLIVAN: *Limitations of Science.*

reasons in order to save them from the embarrassment of having their sacred subject invoked by the ignorant as an argument in favour of materialism. The contention that what science cannot measure does not exist has hampered the progress of thought in many directions.

It is obvious, however, that there are serious dangers of confusion as to the meaning of reality between those who are thinking in terms of values and those who are thinking in terms of physical fact. That flexible and open-minded writer, Olaf Stapledon, complained vigorously at an Oxford conference in 1948 that Christian apologists needed to make up their minds when they were talking of symbolic and when of literal truth. The inference drawn by some of his hearers was that symbolic truth belonged somehow to an inferior order; was less true. I do not know if he would have approved the inference; but as a corrective I would like to suggest a different view. For an artist, the test of a symbol is that it shall work on more than one level of reality. The power of the Christian symbols of Bread and Wine lies in the fact that they work on every level. Bread and wine are facts. On the material level, they will nourish the body of an unbeliever, or a rat. They will also sustain the highest ecstasies of a saint.

Few symbols have this universal power; but I offer for what it may be worth the idea that, far from being inferior to literal truth, a symbolic statement is the only way of expressing a truth for which the literal expression is not enough.

If this thought is distasteful—and many people dislike the whole notion of symbolism: the very word makes them suspicious—I would point out that all communication between writer and reader depends on symbols. The homeliest and simplest of words is a collection of symbols making up a symbol. If I may quote an example I have used before,<sup>1</sup> the word “bucket” is symbolic. It is not an actual bucket: it is not a piece of a bucket: it is not a picture of a bucket. It conveys an idea by being part of a conspiracy or widespread agreement, the English language, which among other things agrees that the letters B, U, C, K, E, T, being symbols representing certain noises, shall in that particular

<sup>1</sup> *An Informal English Grammar.*

combination be themselves the symbol for, not my bucket, nor yours, nor any one bucket exclusively—it is not even as factual as that—but the *idea* of a bucket, which is an abstraction, the name of a quality which all buckets must partake if they are to be buckets at all.

So, whether we like it or not, our lives are dependent on symbols, and we are using them all the time. Not all of them are so accessible, however, and so readily domesticated. It may be well to consider them a little more closely.

4

Symbols are of many kinds, and have many uses. Primarily, a symbol is the statement of a mental association. Some symbols resemble visually what they stand for, e.g. phallic symbols. Others are so dramatic that primitive men everywhere invent the same idea to explain them: thunder has always been associated with the voice of an angry god. There are many symbols so widespread, and so obviously appropriate, that people readily relate each one of them to the same object or idea. These we might call universal symbols. When the association is arbitrary, however, and holds good for one person only or for a limited group, we speak of a private symbol. Groups of children, and families, often make symbols of this kind for their exclusive understanding. (Groups of poets, in the nineteen-twenties, were accused of doing the same thing.) Mathematical symbols are arbitrary, but not private, since very large numbers of people, widely separated in space and time, have agreed to give them limited and precise associations. Magical symbols appear to be arbitrary: the cabalistic symbol for fire has no obvious appropriateness to what it stands for: but whether or not they are private is open to argument, since their users claim for them a universal validity. For example, Yeats reports that when, at a dinner party, he concentrated mentally upon the symbol for fire, inside a couple of minutes the company were talking about fires in the city. Many similar instances are on record, and, without believing or disbelieving them, we may note that there is a tradition of effective symbolism of this kind, of a correspondence

between symbol and object which is said to hold good even for people who have never heard of it.

A broader symbolism of this sort, claimed by some authorities to be universal, is found in dreams. Psychologists account for it variously, under the heading of myth. For one school, these myths relate to the early experiences of childhood, clothing Mother and Father with vast and dimly apprehended significance. Psychologists of this school read major dreams magically, that is with set connotations. A garden invariably means this, a river means that, and so forth. Another school relates the major dream symbols to the mythology of the race, using the hypotheses of a general reservoir of racial memory, which it calls "the collective unconscious", and places at a deeper level than the "personal unconscious", which contains the associations that are peculiar to the individual and are the results of his own personal experience. In this view, the symbols are magical too, but in a different way. They conform to a general pattern, and their application is decided long before they enter the individual's experience, but it is more flexible, less deterministic, a figurative rather than a literal magic.

For example, a boy of barely twelve once told me the following dream:

I was staying at a house party in the country, and one of the guests was a brown indiarubber bull, without any hair. The bull and I were out on the terrace, and he was very friendly to me. He pointed (sic) to a window and said, "Do you see that window? A very nice young lady lives in there, and I'm going to visit her." Then he stuck his middle thing down into the ground, and spun round on it, and floated up like a cloud, only I could still see it was him, and went in edgeways into the open top of the lady's window. Presently he floated down again, and took his proper shape, and said, "Ah! that was very nice."

Whatever school of psychological thought one may favour, it will probably be agreed that this dream of a boy, just before the coming of puberty, who had never heard of Europa and the Bull, Danaë and the shower of gold, etc., made use of a symbolism which lay outside his personal experience in order to represent something which was soon to be an intimate part of that experience. The literature of psychiatry is full of dreams in which

universal human experiences emerge in the experience of the individual, taking the forms of certain vast personifications, the Magician, the Maiden, the Dragon Mother, and many more. Jung and his followers have made a special study of these archetypal images, symbols drawn from the deepest levels of human experience, from the collective unconscious, not from the experience of any one human being, his personal unconscious.<sup>1</sup>

The symbol has the power to concentrate the inner forces, to draw them back into a centre so they can be strengthened and re-energised. The living symbol is therefore a combination of ancient truth and a developing psychic reality—an expression of a future evolving.<sup>2</sup>

*Finnegans Wake* abounds with evidence that, if only for his purposes in writing it, Joyce embraced the philosophy of archetypes and dream symbolism. Finnegan himself appears as Finn MacCool, the legendary hero. Anna Livia Plurabelle is the Eternal Mother, and in her younger embodiment Iseult, the Anima. The Father, the Mother, Shem, Shaun, many of the characters have an archetypal significance, personifying the forces of the dream world, Coleridge's "realms of inmost being", Dallas's greater circle, Jung's collective unconscious.

But our concern for the moment is with the more general aspects of symbolism.

## 5

As we have already said, to be wholly satisfactory, a symbol must hold good on every level of reality. Few symbols have the magical ubiquity and relevance of the Bread and Wine, but there is a general feeling that the value of a symbol depends on the range of its applicability and the constancy of the associations which it embodies.

<sup>1</sup> It is, however, a mark of the flexibility of the Jungian system, its avoidance of dogma, that an individual's personal association with a symbol is given precedence over the archetype. Thus Frances Wickes (*The Inner World of Man*) relates a dream in which the image of the snake turned out to have a private association for a patient, in a dream of which the archetypal interpretation would have made nonsense.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.



This craving for breadth and permanence sooner or later makes most writers uneasy about their medium. "Words, words, words": we cannot but realise that of all symbols words may be the most arbitrary, and therefore of the narrowest application. Words stand for objects, ideas, relationships. They are names which we have agreed to give to these things. If our cat has a kitten, and we call it Frank, or Scrub, or Topsy, the name is a very imperfect symbol for the kitten, because no one outside our immediate circle will associate it with what it stands for.<sup>1</sup> In the same way, a word in one language does not necessarily have the same associations as the word that seems to correspond to it in another language, as every translator knows to his sorrow. Worse, even in the same language words can gradually change their meaning. Our symbol will not call up in others the association it has for ourselves. Poets especially are concerned here, since so many of their effects depend on the emotional associations of a word, or else on stripping the word of its "barnacles", its conventional associations, and persuading the reader to see it afresh. Even so, the poet is better off than most writers, since he can use rhythm and the ritual of a traditional form to give his word a magical validity, and make it part of an incantation. That he does so is shown by the high survival value of great poetry, and its power to retain the magic of constant associations across great stretches of time. Prose can do this too, but with greater difficulty, since its forms and rhythms do not as a rule stimulate the reader's consciousness to so high and sensitive a level, and it less often gives the opportunity to place the single word in such a position that its power is magically intensified.

Against the Capitol I met a lion  
That glar'd upon me and went surly by . . .<sup>2</sup>

and, of the wild swans:

I have gazed upon these brilliant creatures  
And now my heart is sore . . .<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Schoolboys' nicknames, often magically apt, show how often we are dissatisfied with inadequate labels for an individual.

<sup>2</sup> SHAKESPEARE: *Julius Caesar*.

<sup>3</sup> W. B. YEATS: *The Wild Swans at Coole*.

This power to throw the single word into relief makes its associations precise<sup>1</sup> instead of vague—no less precise word than “brilliant” could well be imagined, taken out of this context—and therefore gives them a far greater chance of constancy. For words are in the first instance arbitrary symbols, and their associations vague and uncertain.

To realise how fortuitous a business creative writing is, and what integrity and precision are needed to stabilise and make it good, imagine for a moment that the two open pages before you are blank, that the right-hand page represents the material world, and the left-hand page the world of the imagination, the world of values, the so-called unconscious. (We are justified, I think, in assuming, with a formidable company of poets, critics, painters, musicians, and psychologists, that creative work begins in the unconscious mind.) A poet—or painter, or musician: but, for our present purpose, a poet—sees, on the right-hand page, that is, in the material world, something which deeply moves him. He feels the emotion in his inner world, on the left-hand page, where he cannot do anything about it, since he is incarnate on the right, which contains all his means of doing anything about anything. However, he has learned a craft of arranging little black marks, or symbols, on the right-hand page, so as to represent, however inadequately, something of what he feels on the left. The reader comes along, and reads the arrangement of these symbols which makes the poem. If it arouses in him no emotion on *his* left-hand page, so much the worse for him and for the poet. He is a bad reader for that poem, and it is a bad poem for him. But if the magic occurs, the spark leaps across the gap, and there is aroused on his left-hand page a disturbance more or less resembling what the poet felt (and he cannot feel the same, for no two human souls are alike), then the symbols have been valid, the associations have been precise enough to do what the poet hoped.

This difficulty has worried writers at all times. “If now,” Goethe said,

<sup>1</sup> Not the same thing as narrow! The more precise a symbol is on its first level, the greater its range. Once the level is changed, any vagueness is magnified a hundredfold.

"a man of genius gain an insight into the secret operations of nature, the language which has been handed down to him is inadequate to convey anything so remote from ordinary affairs. He should have at his command the language of spirits, in order to express truly his peculiar perceptions."

The language of spirits is not available. "Poets are not permitted to shoot beyond the tangible"—to repeat Yeats's phrase. The language of the right-hand page is inadequate to convey the experience of the left. It is in this sense that the poet is the "mediator between the world of reality and the world of dreams."

6

Joyce saw this difficulty from the first, and his reaction to it was characteristic. By limiting and concentrating upon his subject matter, he would ensure the maximum of right-hand-page precision and allow his unconscious mind, his left-hand page, to work freely. Then, by combining words and drawing on several languages, he would establish his own associations, and make his own language. The tendency of words to change their meaning he would guard against by bringing together associations from every period within reach, and so free his language from time altogether. *Finnegans Wake* is a continuum: and Joyce has met the difficulties of communication inherent in his left-hand-page material by ensuring that the only communication that takes place must be on his own terms. Only a megalomaniac could have conceived and attempted the book, but a megalomaniac astute enough to capitalise his qualities and his defects: his amazing sense of words, his skill in languages, his musical ear, his gift of fun, his imitativeness: his solitariness, his detachment, his lack of warm human sympathy, his comparative inability to make things happen. The best incidents in his books are in dialogue, his most dramatic happening the quarrel at the dinner table in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. The action in *Ulysses* might be painted on a wall, so much less vivid is it than the dialogue; its value is in the effects it produces on the characters' thoughts and feelings. Joyce's characters develop

very little, for the sufficient reason that they are given no time. *Ulysses* lasts only a day, *Finnegans Wake* a night. Again, it is just as well, for Joyce's view of character is static, and has affinities to that of Dickens and Ben Jonson. He plots an area, and proceeds to fill it closely in with accumulated, not with progressive, detail. To point this out is not to disparage Joyce's character drawing, which can be magnificently successful. But his method, which proceeds by agglomeration, makes for generalised portraits. We are told more than we are shown about Simon Dedalus. He was

a medical student, an oarsman, a tenor, an amateur actor, a shouting politician, a small landlord, a small investor, a drinker, a good fellow, a storyteller, somebody's secretary, something in a distillery, a taxgatherer, a bankrupt and at present a praiser of his own past.

What we see of him would not tell us nearly so much. There is always with Joyce a tendency to dilate character into myth. "I do most solemnly maintain," writes Miss Rebecca West, "that Leopold Bloom is one of the greatest creations of all time: that in him something true is said about man."<sup>1</sup> About man: that is just it. Man the generic figure, timeless man: the Jew in history, *the* Jew as distinct from, let us say, Shylock, who is a Jew. I am neither advocating nor attacking Joyce's method, only showing that because of the quality of his temperament and the nature and size of his medium, it is different in kind.

Ideally Joyce likes to have all the action of his story present before he begins. It irks him, in *Ulysses*, to be obliged to unfold it in sequence. He is continually telling us about things before we know what they mean, as with the paper in Bloom's hat, and his cake of soap. But *Finnegans Wake* gave him everything he wanted: no action, no movement—unless you count the child's wetting his bed—and the whole of his material to hand, catalogued, malleable, all around him, before he began. Starting from the publican's inert body in the bed within the four walls of the room of the house in the street of the city of Dublin in Ireland at a point of time in the earliest years of the twentieth century, his creation can radiate in all directions, slide from level

<sup>1</sup> *The Strange Necessity*.

to level, range recorded time, and challenge time-to-come by arrogating to itself the quality of timelessness. That was Joyce's aim, to the fulfilment of which he gave the last seventeen years of his working life. He aimed in full understanding of his own conscious powers and limitations, and, as we see, he took advantage of both. There were, however, factors which he could not calculate. Only time can show how far he succeeded.

## CHAPTER IX

**W**HAT is the situation expounded in *Finnegans Wake*? From its twilit realm of consciousness how much emerges?

The title of the book is taken from an old music-hall song about an Irish navvy who falls off a ladder when he is drunk, and is taken up for dead, but revives at his wake when splashed with whisky. The line in a chorus refrain, "Finnegan—begin again," links the song with the philosophy of Vico, and is expressed formally by the last sentence of the book running into the first.

The theme is once more paternity. "Who *were* Shem and Shaun the living sons and daughters of?" The spiritual paternity of Bloom for Stephen, giving place to a deeper, even more painful ache of wonder, swells out into the vast theme of God the Father as progenitor of the living universe. Human parentage remains uncertain. Is Isobel-Iseult-Anna daughter or wife? And in which world? HCE, Everyman, is never sure.

An Irish writer, by coincidence a friend of Joyce, was walking home with me one evening from a party. I spoke of the surprise with which one saw in one's child knowledge and qualities one could not account for. The writer smiled bitterly.

"Your son whom you begot is not your son," he said. "He is a changeling, a stranger. But one day, in a bus or a tram, for a minute without speaking, you saw a boy or a young man, and never saw him again. *He was your son.*"

After the story of the music-hall song has been given, like an overture, Finnegan is superseded by Humphrey Chimpden Earwicker, the central figure of the book. Landlord of the Bristol public-house, close to the Phoenix Park in Dublin, Earwicker, whose universality is proclaimed in the names of Haveth Childers Everywhere and Here Comes Everybody, sleeps uneasily. It is a hot summer evening, there has been a

thunderstorm, and a certain amount of argument at closing time. The name Earwicker is of Scandinavian origin, and a racial memory, sharpened probably by Earwicker's sense of inferiority, causes the patrons of the pub to figure in his dream as Vikings, and sail up the Liffey under his leadership, as did the Danes, until Brian Boru routed them at Clontarf.

As he sleeps, Earwicker labours under a load of guilt. He has sinned, he has fallen, both as Humpty Dumpty, whose name resembles his own, as Adam in the Garden of Eden, and as himself in the Phoenix Park, which stands ("O Phoenix culprit") for the Garden of Eden throughout the book. In the Park it seems that Earwicker committed some indecency, which was witnessed by three soldiers.

His wife shares the bed with him. They have three children, Isobel, a girl of sixteen or seventeen, and twin boys, Jerry and Kevin. Earwicker's wife is Anna Livia Plurabelle, the River Liffey, image of all female and creative and fruit-bearing things. Her daughter is presented as the younger aspect of her, for whom, as Iseult, Earwicker-Tristram has a romantic and incestuous longing. It is as difficult in reading the book to separate mother and daughter as it is to distinguish Earwicker's feelings for the one from his feelings for the other.

The two boys, appearing in the book as Shem and Shaun, express on the masculine side the polarity of thought and feeling which is expressed sexually by the polarity between HCE and ALP. Shem is the introvert who broods alone, and produces writings which no one really understands but himself. Shaun, the extravert, always falls on his feet, and exploits every human situation for what it is worth. He is the sort of successful man who makes a speech at a school prize-giving.

Earwicker is standing as candidate in a municipal election. Unfortunately, a Cad has learned of his escapade in the Park, and threatens to disclose it to Dublin gossip and ruin his chances.<sup>1</sup> There is too a letter, hidden in a dung heap, which a hen scratches up, the revelations of which must be a further danger.

<sup>1</sup> Compare the story of Parnell. Note, too, the strange association of the Cad with Cadenus, the name adopted by Swift in many of his letters to Stella and Vanessa.

Earwicker is brought to trial before a jury of twelve, the regulars from his own bar, who correspond to the signs of the Zodiac. He has four old judges, the four old men to whom we have previously alluded (the four Evangelists, Vico's four phases, the four provinces of Ireland, Blake's four Zoas, Jung's four faculties, etc.). With the old men is their donkey, who turns out to be Chesterton's donkey and all that it stands for.

The trial is an uproar, in which Man makes his apologia in the face of Divine omniscience, human malignity, and the dying senile obstinacy of a traditional interpretation of God's law. Earwicker escapes into a deeper dream, in which the very things through which his sense of guilt expressed itself are idealised into rapture. Tristan had guiltily sought Isolda, Swift had been tormented by love of Stella and Vanessa, love which would never make him a father; yet it is into a dream of Tristram and Iseult that Earwicker's mind escapes, and the four old judges sleep.

As the dream deepens, the consciousness of Earwicker is divided between his sons, a further stage of those recurrent arguments between pairs of opposites, the Mookse and the Gripes, the Ondt and the Gracehoper, Cain and Abel, the stone and the tree, which would appear to dramatise the opposition in character, not only between Shem and Shaun, but between the introverted and extraverted aspects of Earwicker himself. The sons have adventures corresponding to Vico's phases and consistent with the fable which their characters illustrate.

The book ends with a resurrection; Earwicker is freed from his sense of guilt, Tristram has made a home for Iseult, the Phoenix Park has become the Phoenix<sup>1</sup> of a new phase of civilization and a new life, the river is lost in the sea, and the whole process is ready to start again.

Anyone who wishes to go into the structure of the book in greater detail is advised to get hold of Messrs. Robinson and

<sup>1</sup>Wholly vanished was that street of the City of Seven Hills, and out of the city's ashes rose the bird Phoenix, which having encompassed several deaths and resurrections alighted on the Thames, whose virgin waters then conceived an abundance of life, such as had been once that of the Euphrates, of the Nile and of the Tiber, bereaved rivers now flowing with sacred dead water—JOHN COURNOS: *Babel*.



Campbell's *Skeleton Key*, where it is all set out with admirable patience, erudition, and clarity.

They do not settle everything: indeed, they would be the last to claim finality. Where so many levels of experience are involved, we are not sure where to place the emphasis. For instance, the Four Old Men, at once waspish and gloating over the love of Tristan for Isolde, judging Earwicker in the light of an outmoded dogma: are they censorious in their apostolic capacity? They deprecate the errands of Earwicker's dream; is it as the four posts of his bed—

Matthew, Mark, Luke and John,  
Bless the bed that I lie on—

or as the four walls of the room from which his dreams release him? Why do the four functions judge him? Is it because, as Jung says, salvation always comes through the inferior function? We are safest in saying that the four would like to hold his unconscious mind as surely as the walls and bedposts hold his body. Again, is the thunderclap Vico's thunderclap only, or is thunder still muttering on Three Rock Mountain, and is Earwicker's later windburst an echo or a parody? There is hardly any limit to the questions that can be asked: but the real questions are, what was Joyce trying to do? And what has he gained by his method of presentation?

He himself denied that the method was difficult.

"If there is any difficulty in reading what I write it is because of the material I use. In any case the thought is always simple."<sup>1</sup>

This refers to *Ulysses*, but to its more intricate passages, and he does not appear to have recanted it, in his own person at least—we should not take the reference in *Finnegans Wake* to his "usylessly unreadable Blue Book" seriously. But is all the difficulty in the material? Unless by material Joyce meant texture, this is hard to accept. The trouble is that Joyce is doing two things at once, and they are not so much complementary as at cross-purposes. He has taken the method of free association and dream-amalgam, and the timeless four-or-five-things-at-once thinking of the unconscious mind, and crossed it with the

<sup>1</sup> FRANK BUDGEN: *James Joyce and the Making of Ulysses*.

deliberate ingenuity of the conscious mind to reproduce and greatly complicate these qualities. Thus consciousness, instead of explaining Earwicker's dream material, often makes it more difficult. Given a clue or two, we can find out what a dream is about, or at any rate get the gist of it. But consciousness is logical, and because, do what it will, it has to work in terms of three dimensions of space and one of time, it very seriously confuses our attempt to measure unconscious material, by introducing a second standard of reference. Joyce did not just elaborate and make acrostics from unconscious material: it was not as simple as that. He complicated the whole creation by bringing in a second and incompatible way of assessing experience.

2

In so difficult a matter, let us look for a little help from authority. Both methods have been observed in Joyce. Mr. Stephen Spender sounds a warning:

The unconscious is the chaos of unexpressed and uncontrolled desires and emotions, and the danger is that of simply reflecting the unexpressed.<sup>1</sup>

True: but this presupposes a Freudian view of the unconscious, and makes no allowance for the doctrine of the collective unconscious and its archetypal images. Mr. Desmond MacCarthy takes a similar view:

The attempt (endless and hopeless in its very nature) to reproduce in print the very texture of consciousness leads Mr. James Joyce to record, in page after page, the jabberings—I cannot call them *sub-human*, but they are *sub-rational*—of the idiot or flat-headed savage who talks unheard in the backward abyss of our minds, and sometimes screams audibly in delirium.<sup>2</sup>

Later, however, he admits that in *Finnegans Wake*,

. . . now and then a vague majestic beauty glides ghost-like through the bewildering darkness.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *The Destructive Element*.

<sup>2</sup> *Criticism*, 1932.

<sup>3</sup> *Sunday Times*, Jan. 19, 1941.

It appears from the context of his first passage that by "the very texture of consciousness", Mr. MacCarthy means that which we have been calling the unconscious, and that he takes of it a limited and strictly Freudian view to which Joyce would not have subscribed. The unconscious as viewed by Joyce contains not only ape-like urges but intuitions of immortality: and he had good authority for so regarding it.

Neurosis is not necessarily a manifestation of weakness; it may be a valid indication of nobility of character or type. Thus the psychiatrist . . . has as his function, not the mere raising of a person of inferior quality to the normal level, but that of one who assists in creative work, who becomes, as it were, the accoucheur to render help in what is something of more significance than are mere private distresses.

Thus Dr. Gustav Richard Heyer, in a dissertation<sup>1</sup> upon Jung's approach to the problems of the unconscious. And, of the same approach, the American psychiatrist, Dr. Frances G. Wickes, says, of the archetypal images:

Throughout the ages men have concentrated upon an image, or upon a spiritual concept embodied in a redeeming symbol, and have thereby activated forces within the self.<sup>2</sup>

Such images and symbols are found in the collective unconscious. But let us come to a notice of Joyce's second process. Referring to the necessity for substituting the original for the associated image in order to get at the writer's architecture and meaning (in other words, to find out what the dream image symbolises), Mr. John Sparrow cautiously remarks:<sup>3</sup>

It is interesting to be told that some of Joyce's work is composed by a converse method: the writer starting with a straightforward logical structure, which he then alters and breaks up by substituting and inserting ideas suggested by associations existing in his own mind, or supposed to exist in the minds of his characters.

The problem is, can the two traffics be continuous and be interwoven in harmony? Or will they collide? And so, to

<sup>1</sup> *The Organism of the Mind.*

<sup>2</sup> *The Inner Life of Man.*

<sup>3</sup> *Sense and Poetry.*

save further confusion, the second movement be allowed to predominate? Mr. Sparrow is on the side of consciousness.

. . . once association is made dominant in the choice of component ideas, there is a risk that it will play havoc with the structure of the thought itself. The component sentences may be, by themselves, intelligible, but they seem not to express the single movement of a mind.

If Joyce's sentences do not express the single movement of a mind, it is because there is so often a double movement. It is as if a man could stand on both banks of a stream at once, facing himself across it, and try simultaneously to jump from left to right and right to left: or, if not simultaneously, in such irregular and quick succession that he and we become giddy. Joyce's discovery of the literary values of free association had become an *idée fixe*. To enlarge the range of Earwicker's associations, he engaged students to look up for him all the information they could find about earwigs. The French *perce oreille* is amalgamated with Persse O'Reilly, subject of a ballad. A passage about the Liffey is packed with echoes of rivers everywhere. A short passage starting on p. 407, after the keynote "Overture and beginners, please!" contains references to at least sixteen songs (there are very likely others which I have failed to trace), the names of at least five singers, and fifteen other terms connected with stage or concert hall. The fact that Giordano Bruno came from Nola, and so may be called the Nolan, and that there is in Dublin a bookshop called Brown and Nolan, affords Joyce great delight. Frank O'Connor relates that one evening, when he was Joyce's guest, he touched the frame of a picture on the wall.

"What's this?"

"Cork."

"Yes, I see it's Cork. I was born there. But what's the frame?"

"Cork."

Some time later, in conversation with Yeats, Mr. O'Connor said he thought that in some ways Joyce was mad. Yeats reproved him.

"What you take for madness is the integrity, the necessary idiosyncrasy of the artist."

Mr. O'Connor then told him about the picture and its frame. Yeats sat up straight.

"That is mania. That is insanity."<sup>1</sup>

It is, at any rate, evidence of the fixed idea. The association, the unconscious material, has come through into consciousness with a life of its own, a process which, repeated indefinitely, can stiffen into psychosis.

### 3

Now let us look at one or two more authorities, this time more friendly. Mr. G. W. Stonier, who wrote brilliantly of *Ulysses*, was cautious (in 1933) but quickly grasped one essential of *Finnegans Wake* :

Much of it is, at first sight, rollicking and unfathomable gibberish. But it is advisable to approach this new book carefully, as we would listen for the first time to a new and astonishing piece of music. For it is a piece of words as music.<sup>2</sup>

Mr. Edmund Wilson, after defending Joyce's use of material outside Earwicker's mind, enquires:<sup>3</sup>

... Is it not pretty far-fetched to assume that Earwicker's awareness of the life of Swift or the Crimean war is really to be accurately conveyed in terms of the awareness of Joyce, who has acquired a special knowledge of these subjects? Also, what about the references to the literary life in Paris and to the book itself as *Work in Progress*, which takes us right out of the mind of Earwicker and into the mind of Joyce?

Of Earwicker himself, Mr. Wilson says :

... there has been too much literature poured into him ... not merely has he to carry this load of myths; he has also been all wound

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Gilbert thinks this was a joke only, and quotes from *Ulysses* O'Molloy's line to Myles Crawford: "Your Cork legs are running away with you." But Mr. O'Connor assures me that Joyce was dead serious on this occasion.

<sup>2</sup> *Gog Magog*.

<sup>3</sup> *The Wound and the Bow*.

round by what seems Joyce's growing self-indulgence on an impulse to pure verbal play.<sup>1</sup>

He concludes that, although *Finnegans Wake* "seems for two thirds of its length not really to bring off what it attempts", it has "certain amazing successes" which raise it "to the rank of a great work of literature".<sup>2</sup>

Mr. Harry Levin—what play Joyce would have made with his name<sup>3</sup>—observes:

The impatient reader, perpetually admonished to look out for typographical ambushes and to keep listening for surreptitious rhythms, may come to feel that *Finnegans Wake* is a grim business. Actually it is a wonderful game—by no means a private affair, but one in which many may join, each with his own contribution, and the more the merrier . . . While the main themes are never absent from the background, the foreground is always crowded with topical matters. In the middle distance, ordinarily the shadow of interest, the action is shadowy and capricious. Avid for a story, the reader will find little in Joyce's "meandertale" to reward his pains . . . The richness of Joyce's symbolism helps us to tolerate the realities of the situation. Considered for its vestiges of naturalistic fiction, a night with the Earwickers is weary, flat, and stale.<sup>4</sup>

Mr. Eliot, broadcasting to India, admitted the book's difficulty.

To explain how to read it would have taken a dozen talks; and I don't think that I myself am yet qualified to give them. I will say only that I believe it to be at least as great a work as *Ulysses*, and that is a great book indeed.<sup>5</sup>

And Mr. J. C. Powys, in an essay<sup>6</sup> which gambols round the book like a large and enthusiastic sheepdog, exclaims:

For my part I certainly feel that *Finnegans Wake* is as superior to *Ulysses* as Aeschylus' 'Prometheus Bound' is superior to Shelley's 'Prometheus Unbound', or the Hebrew Bible to the Book of Mormon

<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> levin = the thunderbolt.

<sup>4</sup> James Joyce.

<sup>5</sup> Reprinted in *The Listener*, Oct. 14, 1943.

<sup>6</sup> *Modern Reading*, No. 7.

. . . strange as it may sound to use such a word in connection with Joyce, take it all in all the advance upon *Ulysses* made by *Finnegans Wake* is a moral advance.

I do not know whether the reader may think that the first part of that second sentence at all offsets Mr. Powys's credit as an authority, or how he will feel about his violent rejection of the evidence of Mr. Frank Budgen and of Joyce himself that *Finnegans Wake* is based on dream material:

However much the orthodox interpreters of Joyce bring proof, as Frank Budgen does, that Joyce himself declared he based his work on dreams, I still remain totally unconvinced that *Finnegans Wake* deals with anything else than that normal human life with which all great writers deal.

That, of course, begs the whole question of the role of the unconscious mind in writing: but Mr. Powys, calling himself "an infatuated admirer and most methodical reader of the book", decides that

. . . the *extreme difficulty*, though it is not really *obscurity*, of Joyce's mature style bars him, and *always will bar him*, from a place among the very first rank of writers in our language,

and then, contradicting himself, hits the nail a ringing blow on the head:

I hold the view that the really great things in writers of genius and the things that will influence posterity are *not* the things which are premeditated and intended, but the things that rise up from the depths of the writer's unique soul, and are diffused through his work.

In other words, the things that rise from his unconscious.

4

*Finnegans Wake* is a work of genius which labours under five main defects:

1. The two processes, from association to object, from object to association, seldom harmonise, and often create serious confusion.

2. The method depends not on selection, but on accretion. It would be idiotic to say that Joyce did not select, but his *method* is not selective. Where different drafts of his work have been published, the revisions tend to get longer and more elaborate.

3. Whereas dream material is ninety-nine per cent visual—there is little sound in most people's dreams, and next to no smell or touch—*Finnegans Wake* is very seldom visual. It is all addressed to the ear.

4. In his effort to cheat time and guard against the changing sense of words, in his endeavour to isolate meaning, Joyce has run a risk of locking it away in cold storage.

5. For the greater part of its length, it is a book written to a theory.

We need not be bothered when Earwicker's mind commingles with Joyce's or anyone else's in a book wherein the destiny of the river is to "mingle with the ocean". Earwicker asleep is universal man, and can overhear and share in Joyce's jibes at Joyce as Shem the Penman, or in any man's mind at any time. Nor should our flesh creep at Mr. MacCarthy's picture of the unconscious. Once it can be to some extent integrated with consciousness, balanced life is a harmony between the two. That one should not get some of the main clues to the book's meaning till near its end we can also accept, for the book is by its nature circular, or static, not laid out in a straight line in time. Reading it is like rising in a balloon and watching the ground gradually take form and shape and its features assume relationship to each other, as in a map. But the five defects above are still serious. To admit them is by no means to disparage the book as a whole. The novels of Dickens gape and glare with faults, yet they are indisputably works of genius. The last scene of *Twelfth Night*, a perfunctory jumble of coincidences and inadequacies:

Pursue him and entreat him to a peace . . .

—and this after Malvolio's exit, humiliated, raging, has stopped the play—in no way detracts from the loveliest comedy in the language. The lyric harmonies of the fifth act of *The Merchant of Venice* do not resolve the discords of the trial scene, yet who would wish either away? We must face, as Mr. Powys points



out, the possibility that *Finnegans Wake* succeeds in spite of its programme. That it achieves tremendous things grows clearer the more one reads it; long after the game of spotting significances has lost its early thrill. In any case, success or failure, it remains a brilliant and formidable feat of literary pioneering, to which all future artists in words must be in debt, if only because it shows some things to be impossible.

5

All this assumes that Joyce's aim was purely literary, that is, one which came within the range of literary criticism as it is commonly practised. The purpose of literary criticism is to find out what a writer is trying to do, to decide how far he has succeeded, and to relate his performance to previous performances of a similar kind. It is apt to break down when the writer is attempting something outside the range of what the critics have hitherto been called to consider. Such an attempt is likely to upset the whole system, since, if the critic does not understand what the writer is trying to do, he cannot know whether it is well done; nor can he relate an unknown quantity to the body of previous work.

Thus Dr. Johnson went astray in his verdict on *Tristram Shandy*. He said it would not last, because it was too odd. Odd it certainly was, in the sense that it did not resemble the work of anyone else: but it has lasted, far better than Dr. Johnson's own novel and others of which he approved. It has lasted because what Sterne was trying to do was more in line with the ideas of his successors, and because he did it consummately well. Dr. Johnson was judging it in the light of earlier work—much as the Four Old Men judge Earwicker in the light of an obsolete standard.

In the same way, literary criticism for years made little of Blake, because it had only a dim idea of **what** he was about. It has taken us a hundred years to catch up **on** him, and realise what his aims were. Even today, orthodox literary criticism will make little of the prophetic books, because their purpose is outside its range. We have needed a Yeats, a Middleton

Murry, a Keynes, a Witcutt to put us in the way of understanding "anything so remote from ordinary affairs". Blake's error, if it was an error, was that he sought for "the language of spirits, in order to express truly his individual perceptions". At any rate, he made his own language, his own names for the archetypes and the emanations, personages and qualities with which literary criticism had little to do.

Joyce has presented it with a similar difficulty. His aim has been beyond the purview of orthodox literary criticism. He has been trying something new, a task for which he had to forge his own tools. If it is to come to terms with him, criticism must broaden its scope, as it has had to do with Blake. Joyce's endeavour was in terms of literature: writing was his chosen medium: but he tried to make it do more than it had ever been called upon to do before.

Yet the endeavour was in terms of literature: and it is this fact which has misled so many literary critics. The approach was in words, by words, with and from words. This is not the platitude that it sounds. Joyce gives us the clue in the passage we have already quoted from *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*.

Words. Was it their colours? etc. etc,

For Joyce, words were more than the labels we affix to objects and qualities and actions. "Joyce's imagination starts from words," remarks Mr. G. W. Stonier, "and not towards them," and he speaks in another place of his "search for reality from words". Mr. Desmond MacCarthy says that Joyce was

... converted to a theory which the French call "The mysticism of the word", the belief that it is through acquaintance with *words* and knowledge of how to arrange them that we reach comprehension of life. It is a theory that dates from Mallarmé and Rimbaud . . .

And, he might have added, from *abracadabra* and the liturgy of the church. Joyce further believed that by the creation of new, composite, associated words he could create a new reality.

What *was* his aim? We have seen how he went about it. If the argument has been followed, we have seen that he had steeped himself in literature of all kinds, particularly in Shakespeare, Swift, and Blake: that he had brought to them a study of psychology which first his intuition and then his attention showed him was appropriate to their lives and their work: that he impregnated his thought and language with his passionate interest in singers and singing, his knowledge of languages, of history, philosophy, and comparative religion: that he gave seventeen years to the slow and painstaking composition of a huge enigma in which all these things were combined with his reluctant, umbilical love of Dublin in order to portray, ostensibly, the working of the mind in dream. Why?

Blake aimed at stating afresh the essential truths of man's life as spirit. A Christian, for whom Jerusalem was the Heavenly City, he could not accept the orthodox statement of that faith in his time. Joyce could not get away from it: he remained, in his own words, supersaturated with it: he was compelled to come to terms with it, even if such coming to terms meant, from the orthodox point of view, damnation. What he did was, at any rate, the work of an honest man, and as such entitled to respect everywhere. The ethical burden of *Ulysses* has been remarked by many critics. That of *Finnegans Wake* is even heavier. Mr. J. C. Powys, in the essay already quoted, claims that the greatest superiority of the later to the earlier work is "a moral advance".

I would go further, and say that its main interest is theological.

## CHAPTER X

WE are now entitled to see clearly the immensity of the task to which Joyce addressed the last years of his life. It was in the fullest sense a religious task, undertaken by an artist, on a scale which no artist hitherto had attempted. This is not to say that Joyce succeeded where other artists failed, or to claim for him anything more than a great place in the European tradition. It is to say that, equipped with conscious knowledge more detailed and extensive than that of previous artists—if only because of the time in which he lived—Joyce was driven by his genius to attempt more than his predecessors. His attempt was no less than to integrate and redeem the deepest levels of the human psyche.

Nowhere else could he find evidence of the attempt being made on the scale he demanded and in the way he needed to make it. Traditional Christianity seemed to him to have lost its direction, and to be occupied, not with redeeming the deepest levels, but with sealing them off, apart from certain channels along which communication was reserved for professionals. In the shadows of those deeper levels lurked, admittedly, monsters; and fear of those monsters and of their power had led to a sealing off of the territory wherein they live. What is more, too often, as it seemed to Joyce, the original message of God's redeeming love, which extended to the sparrow and the caterpillar, had been lost in an attitude of fear and hostility towards the monsters, to whom also that love should extend.<sup>1</sup> St. George, whose business it should be to subdue and tame the dragon, instead has

<sup>1</sup> Ancient experience and modern knowledge unite in warning us against the deadly error of trying to extirpate, or to paralyse certain tendencies in human nature—tendencies which, if morbidly cultivated or freed from restraint, lead to folly, to crime, and to countless social evils . . . Any attempt to extirpate them would signify also an effort to destroy some of the very highest emotional faculties with which they remain inseparably blended—LAFCADIO HEARN: *Korkoro*.

slain him. The trouble is that slain dragons will not always stay dead, or that, if they do, the stench of their carcasses can breed pestilence even more dangerous than they were when alive. True, there are other religions, other wisdoms, old and new; but none—again in Joyce's view—had been successful in establishing a free two-way traffic between Dallas's inner circle and his outer circle, between the light and the dark, the conscious and that which lies beyond it.

So Joyce started on his huge task, with an equipment greater than that of any artist of his time, an equipment already proved and tested in at least one endeavour which could have been sufficient recompense for a lifetime's work. Having caught the voices of this world, he now set out to hear and to record the voice that was calling from beyond the world: to hear that "confused music within him as of names and memories which he could not capture, even for an instant": to bring to articulate speech a voice that had never been heard before: to redeem the desert: to make a synthesis of all life in one enormous circle of experience, the focus of which was a short space of earthly time, the centre of which was one mind in one house in one street in one city, the seventh city of Christendom, dear dirty Dublin, by the banks of the Liffey, that eternal stream—"Anna was, Livia is, Plurabelle's to be."

To approach this task, Joyce used every means which life had put in his hand. He used his music, his singing voice, and his love of both, which, with his craft as a poet, gave him the means of incantation, whereby alone the magical elements could be called from the deep. He invoked also the great names of those who had gone before him, whose quest was like his own, or whose sufferings or preoccupations he could enter into with sympathy and love; Shakespeare, the greatest of them all; Swift, whose savage indignation bit like the pain in Joyce's own eyes, and whose fate he feared might be his own; Blake, initiate of both the light and the dark, who married Heaven and Hell, who locked up wisdom in strange words of his own devising, and saw the world as Joyce wished to see it: the Romantics, who among them opened up those deeper levels of the mind, and, by concentrating religiously on the single image, made their sight wider

and more universal: the saints and philosophers, the magicians, the prophets, the seers, who from the earliest days had bent their gaze upon the problems of eternity: the Christian saints and mystics, with their symbols, their magic, and their power: and, finally, those modern prophets, Freud, Jung, and many others, who sought for a means to integrate the human soul and make a treaty of alliance between the outer and the inner circles, the shadow and the light, whose business, as one of them has put it, is reclamation, the draining of swamps, redemption, so that all may be fulfilled and nothing be cast away.

This is what Joyce's genius drove him to attempt in *Finnegans Wake*. It is too soon to say to what extent he succeeded, but we can at least salute the attempt, record such areas of success as we can see, and refresh ourselves with admiration and wonder in a garden which no other writer could have thrown open for us.

2

How far his attempt was conscious and deliberate is not easy to determine. The question may seem paradoxical in the case of this most deliberate and conscious of artists, who was concerned always with technique, who composed with agonising slowness, and always seemed to know exactly what he was doing. But genius is more than a manifestation of conscious power. It springs from the unconscious mind, it possesses a man, it drives him to attempts the inward meaning of which may be hidden from his conscious mind. The man who wields magic and calls up spirits may not know what they are and may not be able to control what they do. Joyce was wielding magic; he was invoking mighty names; he was contemplating archetypal symbols, and using words of power; and, all the time, deep within him, was the anguish of the prodigal, the son who has left his Father's house, and, more grievous still, cannot for very honesty go back. The restitution Joyce made was indirect, but none the less an act of devotion. He would attempt for himself what the Church had not done for him: more than that, something which in his judgment the Church had failed to do. He would redeem the Dragon. He would go down into hell, in the steps of Odysseus

and Dante and Swift.<sup>1</sup> From its depths, accepting life's deepest pain, he would raise a triumphant cry, as Shakespeare did in *Lear* and *Hamlet* and *Macbeth*, and proclaim fables of ancestral wisdom, as Shakespeare did in *The Tempest* and *The Winter's Tale*. He would make a ladder joining hell to heaven, after Blake, and with Blake link religion with the feminine principle in life. Inspired by the Romantics, he would open wide the gate between conscious and unconscious, shadow and light. Side by side with the prophets of his own time, he would make friends with the shadow, look on the great archetypes, face his own darkness, and redeem it.

Yet that immense endeavour, that courage, that devotion could still be the work of his unconscious mind. The technical problems on which his conscious attention was fixed could have been the particular detail, the grain of sand, the feather on the bird's wing, the point of light on the surface of the crystal, concentration upon which would set his genius free to look on universal truth. Joyce yet may not have known the full meaning of what he was doing. Personally, I am convinced that he did not. We do not need Keats's comments on genius to convince us that it transcends the purpose and the estimates of the conscious mind, nor Mr. Powys to point out that the greatest achievements of genius often come unplanned and incidental to the artist's design. Programmes belong to consciousness, but inspiration often knocks them cockeyed. The artist may not know what he is after, much less what he is achieving.

Every poem is a groping in the dark after truth. A poet works to find a truth which he did not perceive at the outset.<sup>2</sup>

Joyce would probably have been furious had it been suggested to him that his deepest purpose was unconscious, or that *Finnegans Wake* was a devotional work: but his rage would have been irrelevant, except as evidence that there was good foundation for

<sup>1</sup> Professor E. M. Butler points out, in *The Myth of the Magus*, that the descent into hell—*katabasis*—is a feature in the legends of the Magi, even of Pythagoras, and was regarded as part of his initiation into hidden knowledge.

<sup>2</sup> C. DAY LEWIS: Lecture reported in the Bristol Grammar School Magazine, Spring 1948.

the charge, or rather, the tribute. He knew well that he was making a tremendous attempt, one that called for tremendous arrogance and reliance on his own powers. He supplied the arrogance, claiming that a lifetime was needed for the understanding of his work. Yet even he, I believe, did not realise the full range of his effort, which was not only to justify the ways of God to man, but to justify the ways of man to God; to show God how He should be worshipped.

In theological language, the integration and redemption of the deepest levels in the psyche is known as the conversion of psyche into pneuma; the conversion of the sum of human personality, conscious and unconscious, into pure spirit. It would be foolish to claim this for Joyce. Theologian though he was, he was not concerned with pure spirit. He was concerned with man, and man's situation. His aim was like the aim of the psychiatrist, to reclaim the swamps, to integrate the unconscious with the conscious, to realise the suppressed feminine side of his own personality, to say yes to all that life had to offer. He faced in *Finnegans Wake* the worst that life could do, he confronted primal terrors with primal images, he invoked white magic to vanquish black, he tried, by presenting a picture of life, whole and timeless, to make himself whole, and show others the way to wholeness. And all the time the prodigal, the priest who had died, the son who had not loved his mother aright, the thinker afraid of his feelings, worked unconsciously in and through him, in much the same way as the singer who had never found fulfilment worked in the thought and the text of the book, and in the cherishing of the tenor Sullivan. *Finnegans Wake* is even more a religious book than *Ulysses*. It is, in the original sense of the word, catholic: all-including: universal.

3

The Church is the organisation, in terms of time and space, of faith in an eternal truth subject to neither. The centre of that faith is what has been called "the scandal of particularity", the impact of the Divine upon time and space, an unique event, the birth of Jesus, His life, and death, and resurrection. The



Roman Church further believes that Jesus has expressly protected it from misunderstanding His teaching.

It is clear that Joyce could not accept this further belief, whatever his attitude to the central truth. There is clear evidence that he supported no other Church: the Anglican Church gets short shrift, its thirty-nine articles being dismissed as thirty-nine excuses for impotence, that is, failure to turn the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ.<sup>1</sup> The thirty-nine articles crop up in other places, never to their advantage: "my dudud dirty-nine articles"; and "He could find (the rakehell!) by practice the value of thine-to-mine articles . . ." The "pre-protestant caveat" gets no support from Joyce.

No citation of references to religion, to saints, church history, and theology will make out a case for regarding *Finnegans Wake* as a religious book, since all depends on the way they are used. "The devil can quote Scripture for his purpose." Nothing short of tuning-in to the feeling and atmosphere of the book will bring conviction. I shall not therefore comb its pages for allusions which can be found on one in three of them. If the argument we have pursued is sound, a writer who had so arduously qualified himself for his task, who went about it with so mediæval a devotion, who was so supersaturated with Christian thought and imagery, could hardly fail to express his integrity of spirit in an attempt to unite in his writing what had been so disastrously separated in his life. Disastrously for his health and happiness, that is. We can never complain of the hardships a genius has to undergo, because the pattern to which his life conforms is one which we cannot enter. We dare not even say that the works of genius justify the suffering that occasioned them. We cannot measure that suffering. All we can do is receive the fruits of it, and be grateful, and try to understand them.

What we may call the religious thread is the strongest of those that make the pattern of *Finnegans Wake*. St. Augustine's famous cry, "*O felix culpa*", that is Adam's fall, which necessitated the incarnation and life and death of Christ, recurs many times and in many forms. There are allusions to and paraphrases of numerous prayers, the *confiteor*, the *angelus* (pp. 238, 239): specific

<sup>1</sup> p. 573, ll. 20-3.

prayers in the text (pp. 258, 259): allusions to the Mass (p. 433): the Crucifixion (pp. 458-61): allegories of theological controversies (pp. 152, 294, 459, etc.): dozens of references to Saints, to religious philosophies, to texts, to ecclesiastical abbreviations. There begins on p. 308 an astonishing passage on the vertical descent of unmanifested spirit into material phenomena, establishing the relationship (the Holy Ghost) between the Knower (the Son) and the Known (the Father). In this passage there is, as Messrs. Campbell and Robinson point out, a strong affinity with Blake's theology. In an eloquent passage picturing the different churches, the Christian faith is personified as Iseult. This theme Joyce has also linked with Blake, when he paraphrases the opening of Isolda's *Liebestod*, "Mild und leise . . ." as "mildewed Lisa": "mildew" being a favourite word of Blake for the human corruptions of an industrial age, the age of that Albion whose emanation is Jerusalem.

The process of creation is discussed in the section beginning on p. 260. The Feast in the Tavern contains references of the Last Supper. God the Father confronts Ireland, to the discomfiture of that land of saints and heroes. A reader listing all the references he could find might be excused for thinking that Joyce was obsessed with the metaphysics and history of the Christian faith: and there are passages which show that he was well acquainted with other religious systems. True, the context in which the allusions appear is not always respectful: but Joyce's purpose is to say "Yes" to human life, to survey everything in terms of man's predicament, and to find the deepest meaning in the most trivial occasion.

That "yes", that fundamental and final acceptance of the human situation, is Joyce's cry of faith. It is made in terms of his feminine side, his inferior function, his feeling. It was inferior in his case, because weaker, suppressed. No function is inferior absolutely: all are potentially equal, and would be so in a perfectly balanced human being. Despite the acuteness of his sensibilities, Joyce was a thinking type. He was afraid of feeling, which became for him the inferior function. His feminine receptivity was overlaid by an intellectual and conscious preoccupation with technique. Even his physical receptivity,

his conscious intake of new material, he had deliberately shut off. But by the time he was drawing towards the completion of *Finnegans Wake*, he had somehow realised the injury. "To the thinker," says Frances G. Wickes, in *The Inner World of Man*,

feeling is a nuisance, except as it is exacted from other people . . . It is only when he can see that he must find salvation within himself, in taking responsibility for the archaic and irrational feeling elements in his own unconscious, that he can find the God within, the new value arising from the darkness.

This is not to say that feeling is exclusively a function of the feminine side of a man's nature: but it was with Joyce, and he made it so. Just as *Ulysses* ends with Marion Bloom's pagan "Yes", so *Finnegans Wake* ends with the profounder, fundamental "Yes" where the river gives itself to the sea, where human personality is merged in the collective soul, the particular in the universal, the human in the divine.

4

There remains the accusation, brought against *Ulysses* by orthodox believers, that Joyce, having seceded from the faith, blasphemed against it. *Finnegans Wake* has not so far been included, presumably because the faithful have not yet understood enough of it.

I have myself found no blasphemy in it, no evidence of "*lo spirito che nega*". Except in the grossest cases, blasphemy is not easily defined. Much that gives offence and is taken for blasphemy is merely incongruity, the occurrence of divine references in an unexpected context. Those who are accustomed to keep religious matters in a separate compartment and not to use their wits on them are easily shocked. They have postulated a special context and cannot bear another. The righteous were upset because Christ was seen in disreputable company and rode on a donkey. Unlike the Magi, who being wise could at once bow down before

The uncontrollable mystery on the bestial floor,<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> W. B. YEATS: *The Magi*.

respectable and unimaginative folk are always trying to forget the animal instinctual side of human nature, and have never stopped to ponder the divine appropriateness of the animals being present at the birth of the Redeemer. Many good souls have been scandalised by the homely and even humorous words of negro spirituals. I have known people gravely shocked when a priest at a picnic smilingly used words from the Mass over some mushrooms. After he had gone, these laymen accused him of blasphemy. Nothing could have been wider of the mark. The good man was so secure in his faith that he could play with it; and he knew that anything which the Creator made to be food for man is holy. "What God hath made, that call not thou common or unclean." It is only the uncertain faith that is shocked by common images or shaken by the free play of thought. Anyone who studies Joyce's work will see that whereas he can be merciless to what men have thought about God, he nowhere mocks or denies the divine principle.<sup>1</sup> "The word was made flesh": the core of the Christian metaphysic he understood better than many professed Christians. *Finnegans Wake* could have been written only by a man whose whole attitude to life and to his art was religious. Its aim is essentially religious, its interests are religious and metaphysical. In so far as it may trouble the orthodox believer, this is because every line is written unflinchingly from the standpoint of man. Joyce at no time claims to be out of the struggle, much less above it.

There is nothing in God that man can destroy. The Truth can stand the full battery of human intelligence and human irony. All that can fall away will be those human accretions, the scum and barnacles of human misunderstanding, of human unbelief and fear and self-aggrandisement, with which man has covered the truth. Joyce knew that, and fearlessly turned upon the truth the full astringent force of his genius.

And his mockery, his humour. The story of the priest at the picnic is apposite. Joyce was a joker, a humorist, not the solemn figure so many critics have discovered. Bloom is a

<sup>1</sup> Stephen, in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, admits to Cranly that he can be shocked by blasphemy.

comic as well as a tragic character. His affinities are with Falstaff rather than with Lear. *Finnegans Wake* is full of laughter.

Finally, Joyce was an artist. An artist has his own bargain to keep with God, and no one else can keep it for him. He is bidden to use his gifts to the full. No outsider can tell him what is the right use of them and what is misuse. To require that such a man should accept the dictation of priests was, for him, a real blasphemy: a blasphemy against the gifts the Creator had given him. Priests and ministers of religion are infrequently good judges of art: and art is one way of revealing the truth. The Catholic artist should be of all the best qualified to reveal truth fearlessly, but those who are set over him are too often timid or blind to any sight of truth but their own.

Joyce came from a background unimaginable to most of his readers, a background which claimed to control and direct him and lay down limits not only for his work but his thought. He rebelled. So far was his rebellion from self-indulgence, that it imposed a life of the greatest austerity not only on himself but on his family. With a literary gift that could have been turned to moneymaking, with a singing voice that would have made him wealthy, he preferred the drudgery of ill-paid teaching to a misuse of his powers. He led a dedicated life: and those who would condemn him need to be very sure that their own faith is as clear, and their integrity as strong.



*By the Same Author*

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